

Advanced
Dungeons & Dragons®

PLANE SCAPE

ADVENTURE

FACTION WAR



FACTION WAR

*Being a Chronicle of Dark and Bloody Days in the City of Doors,
a Cautionary Tale of Treachery, Mystery, and Revelation,
and the Wondrous and Terrible Consequences Thereof.*

CREDITS

Designers: Monte Cook and Ray Vallese ♦ Editor: Michele Carter
Brand Manager: Thomas M. Reid
Conceptual Artist: Dana Knutson ♦ Interior Artists: Adam Rex and Hannibal King
Cartography: Diesel and Rob Lazzaretti
Art Director: Dawn Murin ♦ Graphic Design: Matt Adelsperger, Dee Barnett, and Dawn Murin
Electronic Prepress Coordination: Jefferson M. Shelley ♦ Typography: Angelika Lokotz

Dedicated to the PLANESCAPE® Mailing List.

U.S., CANADA,
ASIA, PACIFIC & LATIN AMERICA
Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
P.O. Box 707
Renton, WA 98057-0707
+1-800-324-6496



EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS
Wizards of the Coast, Belgium
P.B. 34
2300 Turnhout
Belgium
+32-14-44-30-44

Visit our website at www.tsr.com

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PROLOGUE

...and none, not even Swalk'kuhr of the Palace of the Jester, could unfold from whence he'd come, or what brain-bits he carried, or even that which he was called. The scap said he worked stony magic, and it was thought widely that he must be a great weaver from Acheron, or Carceri, or Mount Celestia itself, for he spoke exceeding strange. Tyat's Glass guessed that he had once been a mouthpiece but fell from serving gods to desiring to become one, and that he had spent centuries toward that end. And who else dared make such terpitous wails as to see Her Serenity brought low and lashed like a cranium hound? The innocent and the weak alike shut up their blocks and cowered when he passed, half fearing he would bog the Lady, half fearing he would not. Why did she not flay him? Some creakers whispered that his blood must flow faster than even hers, and this scap flew quietly from ear to ear until all of Sigil trembled.

Peak came and went many times, and still the weaver strode through the city as might one of the gyoxchuggi, acting howsoever he pleased, guttering the air with heresy and mud-talk, unre-

strained even by the Sisters of Iron, who rightly turned from his presence.

The weaver's blistering clearly fell to Her Serenity, and she had not been sighted since the fire at the Bank of Keys, some months past. The street-gugs cried that the Lady was gone and would not return, for fear of the weaver's threat to bend the very heart of Sigil itself against her.

But return she did, six bells before antipeak on the 33rd day following her black-foot's arrival in the City of Doors, appearing directly before him as he traced a strange and confusing footpath through the Ward of Masks. Those fled who had time to do so, leaving a half dozen slower or more mud-eyed squatters to witness the confrontation, which, by their scap, seemed to end before it had begun.

Both Lady and challenger were smoke that day, and it was not until Her Serenity graced us with her presence two months hence that all squatters knew who had grabbed the stick and who the snake. The creakers of Sigil then spoke of the twinless ebony gem in which the Lady had boxed her blackfoot, a jewel that glowed as blue as a sky, which she then caused to be buried in the soil of the multiverse, far from the fields of sanity. But why had she not simply fed him to the worms? The scap said further that—

"Sir?"

Duke Rowan Darkwood glanced up from the yellowed tome, his mind still mired in the text.

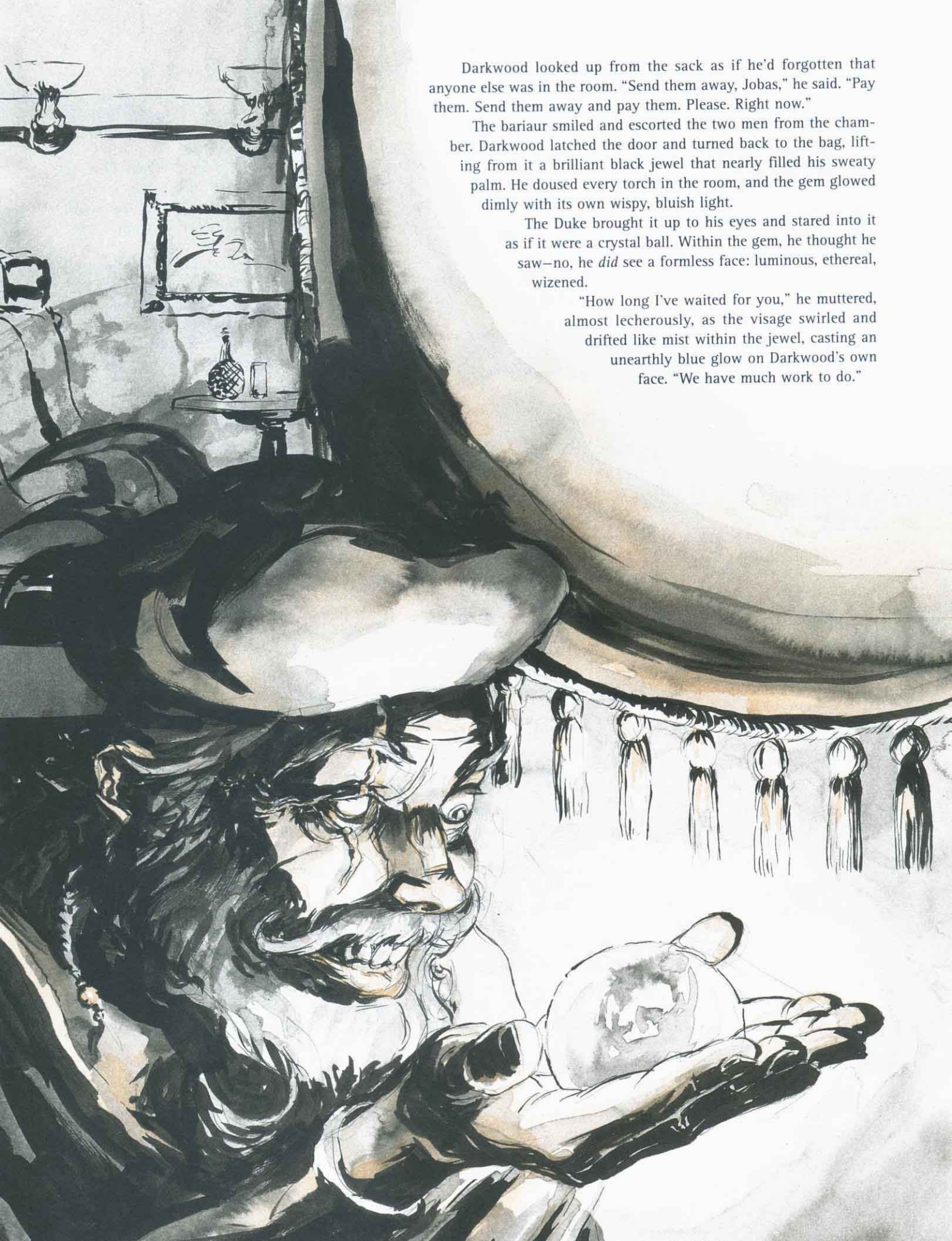
"I'm sorry to disturb you, but—well, we have news." The bariaur waved in a pair of steely bashers who looked as if they'd been trampled by the Modron March. "These two are all that's left of the seventh party we sent to Pandemonium. They—they have something for you."

The bariaur clopped his hooves with nervous excitement as he took a blood-spattered sack from the bigger of the two mercenaries and handed it to Darkwood. The Duke put down the book and rose from his chair. With a smile of weary cynicism, he untied the pouch and peered inside.

He stared for several moments in silence. The hirelings shifted uncomfortably. "Uh, did we, uh, do good?" one asked. "See, there was this new tunnel, see? Which we think opened on account o' this dead god or whatever we heard was knockin' around in those caves, lookin' for something? So, so we was creeping through, see? But we didn't—"

YOU WON'T
BE NEEDED
AFTER ALL.

—JOBAS,
THE 8TH PARTY
BOUND FOR
PANDEMONIUM



Darkwood looked up from the sack as if he'd forgotten that anyone else was in the room. "Send them away, Jobas," he said. "Pay them. Send them away and pay them. Please. Right now."

The bariaur smiled and escorted the two men from the chamber. Darkwood latched the door and turned back to the bag, lifting from it a brilliant black jewel that nearly filled his sweaty palm. He doused every torch in the room, and the gem glowed dimly with its own wispy, bluish light.

The Duke brought it up to his eyes and stared into it as if it were a crystal ball. Within the gem, he thought he saw—no, he *did* see a formless face: luminous, ethereal, wizened.

"How long I've waited for you," he muttered, almost lecherously, as the visage swirled and drifted like mist within the jewel, casting an unearthly blue glow on Darkwood's own face. "We have much work to do."

"You can read a thousand books about a place, but you never really know what it's like to live there until you've actually *been* there."

"Ah, that's just great. Just what I wanted to hear," I said. Why had I come to this old leatherhead anyway? Before the war began, Factotum Aram had assigned me to do this

Ward Guide, and I needed it to be good. Everyone said, talk to Angus, he'll tell you what to write. Some help.

The old man shook his head and began to walk slowly down the street. I assumed he wanted me to follow. I reluctantly did.

"Books are fine," he said, with a bit of condescension in his voice, I was sure. "They'll tell a body that the City Court is found in The Lady's Ward, and the Market Ward is where you buy your bub. But," he stopped as he paused for a moment and looked around him,

"how's a book going to tell folks about the smell from the Green

Iron Forge over there, and how that young bariaur

Thanaoritus raised the

neighborhood against the tiefling smiths because of it? Hmmm?

"Or look over there," he said, pointing to the other side of the street. "See that house with the door that constantly changes color? You won't find any mention of that in a book, but that's where the priest-mage Tenisari lives. She casts curses for jink, and the door's her marker. 'Course, once she placed a hex on a slaad from the Lower Ward who took her head right off. It took three priests of Anu to bring her back and reattach her head—well," he chuckled to himself, "not in that order.

"Or how about," he continued, "knowing who's really in charge? Sure, the books tell you what the Hardheads do and who the Mercykillers tote off to the Prison, but no book can tell you about Tiritesh and how he keeps the streets of New Pelion safe, or who watches over who in the Slags, or things like that."

I stared at him. "There's nothing keeping me from putting in details like that in my book. I could fill it with points like that, skipping over the 'this tavern's here and this public building's there' kind of chant everyone already knows—"

"Yes," he interrupted, smiling. "Yes, you could."

Damn. I hate being manipulated. Nevertheless, he was right, and I'd fallen for his little game. Folks were right to send me to old Angus. He set me straight on what I should write.

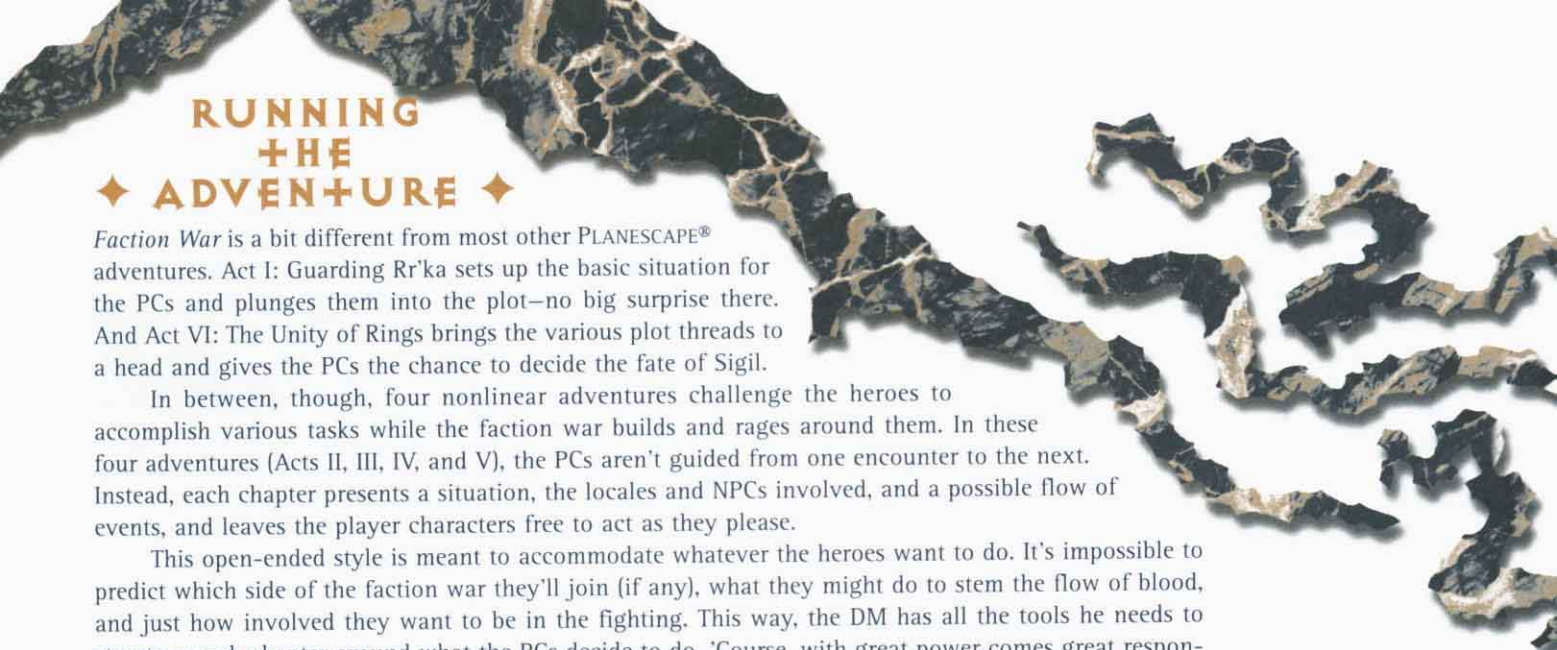
The Big Picture? Not really—more like how the "little pictures" fit together to become the "big picture." For a place that's had more written about it than probably any other, that's what hasn't yet been said. My book details the little things that every Cager knows make things work. This work isn't about the system, but how all the high strangeness of the City of Doors comes together to make a working whole.

They tell me that they're going to take a condensed version of what I've written and put it in a book detailing the big faction war. Great, I say. Where's my jink?

—Fragoh Naeil, narrator

PEERING INTO THE CAGE

SIGIL CAN BE HARD
+⊕ WRAP YOUR BRAIN-BOX
AROUND SOME+IMES.
—KYLIE +HE T⊕+



RUNNING + THE ◆ ADVENTURE ◆

Faction War is a bit different from most other PLANESCAPE® adventures. Act I: Guarding Rr'ka sets up the basic situation for the PCs and plunges them into the plot—no big surprise there. And Act VI: The Unity of Rings brings the various plot threads to a head and gives the PCs the chance to decide the fate of Sigil.

In between, though, four nonlinear adventures challenge the heroes to accomplish various tasks while the faction war builds and rages around them. In these four adventures (Acts II, III, IV, and V), the PCs aren't guided from one encounter to the next. Instead, each chapter presents a situation, the locales and NPCs involved, and a possible flow of events, and leaves the player characters free to act as they please.

This open-ended style is meant to accommodate whatever the heroes want to do. It's impossible to predict which side of the faction war they'll join (if any), what they might do to stem the flow of blood, and just how involved they want to be in the fighting. This way, the DM has all the tools he needs to structure each chapter around what the PCs decide to do. 'Course, with great power comes great responsibility—running the four nonlinear chapters will require a bit more work on the DM's part.

Faction War is built around a Timeline, which begins on the back cover and continues onto the gatefold. It lists the main events of the war in chronological order, beginning well before the PCs get involved. Many of the Timeline's events are fleshed out in the chapters, but some are described *only* in the Timeline. Thus, it lets the DM know what's happening in Sigil even if the heroes can't take part in everything. Also, the Timeline's an overall guide, not a minute-by-minute account of what every sod in Sigil is doing—the DM's encouraged to work in additional events as desired.

The use of the Timeline makes the game more dynamic and exciting, but it requires careful attention. The DM must always keep an eye on the Timeline so he knows what's playing out on the larger backdrop as the PCs go about their business.

After Act VI, a short Epilogue ties up a few loose ends, and a comprehensive Aftermath presents the changes to Sigil as a result of the war. What happens to each faction? How does government, commerce, and the balance of power in the Cage change? The answers're all right here—the DM doesn't have to buy another product to learn the dark of the “new” Sigil.

PLAY IT YOUR WAY

It's worth noting: The DM should introduce plenty of elements from his own PLANESCAPE campaign into *Faction War*. If the player characters have made a number of friends or enemies in the Cage, those NPCs should appear in the story—and perhaps be killed off in spectacular fashion. If the PCs love to spend time in a favorite tavern, let one of the factions commandeer the place and defend it against their foes—or just burn the watering hole to the ground. If certain folks or groups in Sigil already hate each other's guts, let them fight it out in smaller skirmishes all over the city—beyond the large-scale battles described in the “official” chapters.

In other words, the DM shouldn't feel that he must artificially shoehorn the events of *Faction War* into his own campaign. It's much more fun to integrate the two into a seamless whole. And given all the chaos sweeping through Sigil, there's never been a better time for the DM to spring his own favorite surprises and changes on the hapless heroes....

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The chapter entitled “How It Begins” doesn't contain a blow-by-blow summary of the *Faction War* adventure. That kind of chant appears on the Timeline, which clearly spells out each event, in order, from before Act I ever begins right up to the conclusion in Act VI.

◆ PREPARING FOR PLAY ◆

Faction War is an epic AD&D® PLANESCAPE adventure designed for a party of four to six player characters of 5th to 9th level. In order to run the game, the DM must have the PLANESCAPE Campaign Setting boxed set (2600). The following products would enhance the DM's understanding of Sigil and its denizens, but they're not required: *Factol's Manifesto* (2611), *Uncaged: Faces of Sigil* (2624), *In the Cage: A Guide to Sigil* (2609), the *Planewalker's Handbook* (2620), the PLANESCAPE MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM® Appendix I (2602) and the PLANESCAPE MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM Appendix II (2613).

Italicized text printed in amber should be read aloud or paraphrased for the players; all other chant in this book is for the DM's eyes only. Several kinds of special notes appear throughout the adventure:

- ◆ Sections marked **DM NOTE** are intended to call attention to important information.
- ◆ Sections marked **THE REAL CHANT** help make clear what's really going on.
- ◆ Sections marked **SLIPPING THE BLINDS** try to help the DM deal with specific problems.

As always, the DM should read through this book from cover to cover before running the adventure. *Faction War* is rewarding but complicated, and the DM needs to be sure he understands how to handle the Timeline and the non-linear chapters. It might help to photocopy the Timeline out of the book and keep it handy—and out of sight!—during the game. Making copies of chapters as needed and hiding the book from the players will help, too. After all, if they see that it's titled *Faction War*, they won't be as surprised when events start leading their characters toward the massive conflict.

Finally, remember that a PLANESCAPE game ain't about racking up kills and hoarding treasure. It's about the might of ideas and the majesty of the cosmos, and the DM should stress good roleplaying. 'Course, any berks who try to stop the war by fighting everyone in sight'll just hit the blinds before long, anyway—unless they're sent straight to the dead-book.

Since *Faction War* is a Sigil-based adventure, the following sections take a look at the various wards and districts of Sigil, all of which figure heavily in the course of the war. This chapter takes into account the inhabitants, the politics (factional and nonfactional), and the general flavor of life found in each ward, making it easier for the DM to run this adventure and further Cage-based adventures of his own devising. Additionally, this chapter discusses the mysterious region known as UnderSigil, which figures into parts of the adventure quite extensively.

Those impatient to know the dark of the war are, of course, free to skip ahead to "How It Begins" on page 32.

◆ THE LADY'S WARD ◆

The Lady's Ward is an archetype of contradiction, and it's funny that most berks don't see it that way—at least not immediately. The ward is home to the rich and the powerful, as well as the law of the city. See the contradiction? The rich and the powerful of Sigil are as far from the law as any knight of the post in the Hive.

Folks say that The Lady's Ward hasn't always been called that. Chant is, it was once called the Palace Ward. It was renamed, the story goes, to appease the Lady herself. 'Course, the touts who tell this tale also say it's the oldest ward in the city—and how can that be true? Given the city's nature, wouldn't it all have been created (or whatever) at the same time? Well, that's for bigger minds (with less to do) to contemplate.

The Lady's Ward is easily divided into two parts: the High Houses and the Law Houses. These definitions don't refer to areas so much as function. That is to say, a body can't draw a line between the High Houses "area" and the Law Houses "area." Nothing in the Cage is ever that easy.

THE HIGH HOUSES

The High Houses are the palaces and mansions of Sigil. These regal dwellings are surrounded by well-kept homes for serving staffs, fine (and expensive) shops and services, and elegant places to dine, drink, and be entertained. Want to part with a fortune? Spend a night in The Lady's Ward, as the saying goes.

Sigil's rich—also known as the golden lords, the knights of the ward (referring to The Lady's Ward), and the keepers of the trust—live in utter opulence. Some would add "decadence" as well. Most of the Clueless can't even begin to grasp the wealth of these bloods. They can buy and sell entire cities or even kingdoms, although they rarely take part in anything so sordid. On prime worlds kings and emperors possess most of the wealth, but here in Sigil, folks have taken the fortunes of kings and used it to establish financial empires almost always built upon interplanar trading. (Mercenaries and planewalkers take note: Those berks who've turned down jobs escorting planar trading caravans or shipments because it was too "lowly" a duty have probably missed out on the chance to impress some real top-shelf bloods!)

Most of the golden lords are so wealthy that they no longer play any part in their own financial empires. The wealth and influence is simply too great to be managed by one basher, so they employ an army of underlings to administer things for them. Many of these managers are fabulously rich merchants in their own right, and no one knows that they are only "middle management." Even the managers don't know that they work for the same lord. It's a conspiracy of wealth.

The knights of the ward spend their time living the good life as only The Lady's Ward can provide. Most, how-



ever, are not content to simply enjoy the finest food, drink, entertainment, and luxury that the planes have to offer. Instead, they use their position to manipulate people and events to their benefit—not to gain more wealth (for their wealth is almost limitless), but to gain power. In Sigil, at the heart of it all, they attempt to pull the strings that control the multiverse.

Some graybeards—the paranoid ones—say that if a body wants to see the cause behind anything that happens on the planes, he should look to the High Houses of The Lady's Ward. Now, that's taking things way too far. Most tanar'ri, for example, couldn't give a ratatosk's third toe for what some rich basher in the Cage thinks or wants. Planetars aren't impressed by wealth. Most slaadi, well, most slaadi'd probably say "where?" if Sigil was mentioned. 'Course, that doesn't mean that these groups can't be manipulated by master string-pullers like the golden lords of Sigil. Even the high-up baatezu admit to having a fair bit of respect for these canny manipulators.

Many of those among the otherwise well-lanned Cagers don't know of the "wars" fought among the wealthy bloods of Sigil. That's because these silent wars of treachery, manipulation, deceit, and double-dealing don't often leak out into the Cage. The golden lords use their money and influence like weapons, smashing the plots of their enemies while advancing their own. If these silent wars sound similar to the endless struggles for control that the factions of Sigil fight all the time, it's no coincidence. Their goals frequently correspond, and the golden lords

and the factions use each other for their own ends. Remember, many of the knights of the ward are also faction members—or fierce opponents.

For example, the d'Arlen family, particularly its current master, Timmon (Pl/♂ human/F6/N), has long strived to gain complete control of all of the touts in Sigil. Now, the obvious question would be, "why?" The answer is simple. The touts are often the first source of knowledge for the Clueless who come to town. Therefore, anyone who controls what the touts say, where they direct the newcomers, and what they *don't* say becomes an extremely powerful basher. It's a simple way to subtly control an entire segment of the population. And it's a segment that many overlook as insignificant, so there shouldn't be any opposition, right? Well, that's what the d'Arlens thought too.

Chant has it that the Ciphers caught wind of what the d'Arlens were up to and immediately decided to stop them. Why?

It seemed like the right thing to do at the time.

Cipher funds began pouring onto the streets of the Cage to buy off existing touts or to hire and train new ones. This jink was channeled through so many different sources (the resources of any faction are quite astounding) that the d'Arlens had no idea that their competition was an entire faction until literally years had passed.

When Timmon d'Arlen took control of the family empire upon the death of his mother (the circumstances were not questionable—Timmon is very good at what he does), he tumbled to the fact that the Ciphers were vying for control of the city guides. Rather than concede to a superior force, Timmon directed his influence and considerable monies toward gaining the alliance of Factol Emma Oakwright of the Fated. Once he had established a relationship with the Takers, he



maneuvered them into investigating the fact that a great many touts—particularly those who had shown up during the recent increase in the ranks of that profession over the last few years—were woefully neglect in paying their taxes. Suddenly, the touts of the city, especially those in the pocket of the Ciphers, were hunted on the Cage's streets by the Fated with the muscular help of the Harmonium. (Many touts still refer to those few months as the “dark times.”) Though the Transcendent Order was able to recover some of its losses by harboring its touts (or simply paying their back taxes through circuitous jink-paths), the d'Arlens had won a significant victory in their silent war.

This and many other wars go on even today, with new “battlefields,” “weapons,” “casualties,” and “spoils.” They may not seem like conventionally fought wars, but their outcomes are just as important and far-reaching.

THE TEMPLES

Also counted among the High Houses are the temples of The Lady's Ward, most of which are palaces in their own right. The temples found here are extravagant places dedicated to the most powerful or respected powers in the multiverse. A body might say that The Lady's Ward is built more on respect—sometimes begrudging respect—than on money or real power.

Why build a temple to a power in a place where that power can't go? Why would anyone care in the Cage? It seems a simple question, but it's not. Even the cynicism and jadedness of the City of Doors can't completely drown out faith and devotion. True believers and followers worship their gods no matter where in the multiverse they go. That's understandable. But it doesn't completely explain the temples of Sigil—Cagers (those born and bred here) are an impious lot. That doesn't mean that the Athar have won their propaganda war; it just means that it's easy to get caught up in the daily grind in Sigil and forget about the gods. Worrying about keeping the authorities off a body's back and the barmies from his mind, keeping the faction high-ups happy and paying his taxes keeps a berk pretty busy. And all that doesn't even take into account a body's family, job concerns, and everything else that goes into making a life an interesting thing to live. Even those who take the time to think about the big picture are more likely to think about factional beliefs that try to explain the multiverse than about religion.

No, the temples in Sigil are more about respect than devotion. A power's followers and proxies, if they've got enough clout, establish a temple in the City of Doors primarily as a statement about that god's power rather than providing a place for the local congregation to worship (although it serves that purpose too). The temples, especially

OH, SURE,
THE FACTIONS HAVE POWER,
BUT I WOULDN'T MIND
SETTLING FOR THE MONEY
OF THE GOLDEN LORDS
INSTEAD.

—TAREK INNAVIMON

those found in The Lady's Ward, stand as showy structures of grandiose presentation and awe-inspiring architecture. The priests of these temples hold their own sort of political power in the Cage, similar to (but not nearly the equal of) the golden lords.

Many are proxies of the powers themselves, and the temples are their palatial homes as well as monuments in honor of the deity they represent.

Intrigue plays a big part in the activities of the temples of this ward. Each schemes to become greater than the others. Even establishing a temple in The Lady's Ward is difficult, since every other temple there tries to stop it from happening. Garnish, favors, and flattery need to be spread thick and in the right places to be successful.

Once established, various churches and temples wage wars of lies, deceit, politics, and even vandalism against each other. Holy relics are stolen or defaced, religious rituals are sabotaged, and parishioners are accosted or threatened. And don't be fooled into thinking that only temples dedicated to evil powers conduct themselves in this way. Neutral and even good priests are forced to stoop to these tactics just to survive. One temple or another is always looking for mercenaries or planewalkers to do some dirty deed to an opposing faith or simply to help protect themselves from their numerous enemies.

But when it comes to planewalkers, most look at temples with one thing in mind: getting wounds healed and sicknesses cured. While there're obviously plenty of exceptions, most adventurers just aren't very pious. This outlook fits in real well in the Cage. A few of the temples have become more houses of healing than places of worship (if they ever really were that to begin with). These places found that the business of curing the sick and tending to wounds can be extremely lucrative. The temples of Apollo, Diancecht, Pelor, and even Frigga have expanded and grown to a level of power and influence far exceeding the rank and status of the powers they represent simply because they offer healing.

The cost of healing fluctuates from day to day, based on what somebody from the Market Ward might call the “going market value.” On average, however, a body should expect to pay around 100 gp per level of the spell that the priest has to use. Other charges might apply depending on the situation.

LAW, JUSTICE, AND INEVITABLE DOOM

Want to find the common folk in The Lady's Ward? Sadly, the best place to look is around the Prison or the Tower of the Wyrm at execution time. Bashers come quite regularly

from the Lower Ward (and the rest of town) to watch justice done by the Mercykillers.

The Law Houses are the City Barracks, the Prison, and the City Court. Each has a small “community” of homes, shops, and services that cater to those who work in those places and those who visit. The demeanor of the residents is the best guide to whether a body’s in a High House or a Law House locale. Even the servants of the High Houses dress and smell better than a good number of the poor sods forced to visit the City Court or the Prison, for example. Likewise, the military atmosphere surrounding the City Barracks won’t be found around the High Houses (although security there is just as tight).

The Law Houses have a distinctly different feel than the rest of the comfortable and well-kept ward. Oh, it’s not that they’re not well kept, it’s just that the militaristic feel of the Law Houses areas are grim where the other areas are elegant, and harsh where the others are pristine.

Interestingly, the three “Law House factions” (the Fraternity of Order, the Harmonium, and the Mercykillers) don’t feel that they control or have a special attachment to the ward by any means. The factions have much loftier goals than that, and they’re content to allow the knights of the ward and the priests of the great temples to conduct their little struggles for supremacy. The Law Houses don’t generally involve themselves with High House dealings unless they impact the factions’ works.

Likewise, the Doomguard (whose Armory is based at the edge of The Lady’s Ward) doesn’t feel any special affiliation with it. In fact, many Doomguard hold a special distaste for the ward and its inhabitants. The members of this faction look upon the wealthy lords as foolish sods who waste their money building empires that’re destined to crumble.

LIVING IN THE LADY’S WARD

Although it’s easy to think that the ward comprises only the High Houses and the Law Houses, the folks who live in The Lady’s Ward separate the ward into six districts: the Court District (surrounds the City Court), Firmground (the City Barracks area), the Armory District (the blocks around the Armory, also known as Entropy’s Gem), the Graytowers District (surrounds the Prison), the Temple District, and the vast Nobles’ District.

While many of the residents of The Lady’s Ward are wealthy, many more are not. These folks work as servants in the High Houses or operate the shops, restaurants, taverns, and services that serve the knights of the ward. Plus, many members of the Harmonium, Mercykillers, Fraternity of Order, and the Doomguard live near the headquarters of their factions (not all, by any means, but some do), and they’re certainly not all rich.

But who’s fooling who? The Lady’s Ward is for the rich. That can’t be denied, and nobody really argues the

A DUNGEON MASTER’S VIEW OF THE LADY’S WARD

BUILDINGS AND STREETS: The grandest and most beautiful in Sigil. Palaces, grand avenues, and wide, clean streets.

NPCs: The wealthy and their servants. The rich and powerful keep their lips tight, but their servants often know the secret comings and goings of their masters. The people of The Lady’s Ward concern themselves with large issues and thus rarely possess any valuable information about minor matters such as individual crimes or the newest import in the Market Ward. They’ll know about shake-ups within the factions, major events on other planes, and sometimes news from the realms of various powers (the Temple District is particularly good for such chant).

Although all races are represented, player characters are unlikely to come upon fiends or the more monstrous creatures of the planes. The Lady’s Ward also has the fewest number of tiefling residents of any ward. Humans, half-elves, elves, genasi, aasimar, and bariaur make up most of the population—in that order. Priests are a common sight, but thieves—at least petty street thieves—are very rare.

QUALITY AND PRICE OF GOODS: High on both counts. The folks who live here can and will pay for the best.

LOCATION OF AUTHORITIES: The City Barracks holds the largest force of Harmonium guardsmen in the city.

point. The streets here are safer (or more dangerous for knights of the post), the buildings are better kept, and a body’s got access to all the good things the planes have to offer—if a basher is of the right sort. The Hardheads patrolling the streets of the ward can tell by sight (so they say) who belongs in the ward and who doesn’t. They escort the “wrong sorts of people” right out of the Noble’s District if they don’t arrest them outright. The other districts are more open and forgiving, but the entire ward bears the character of the stomping grounds of the elitist rich to one extent or another.

The main streets here are wide and open. The narrow alleys appear more like normal streets in the rest of the Cage. The wide streets aren’t the reason that a body won’t find himself in a crowd here, though. Folks get where they’re going and hurry inside. The Hardhead patrols are thick, and no one wants to be scragged for doing something they didn’t even realize was wrong. Why take the chance?

The wealthy spend much of their time attending formal balls and elegant parties where they forge new alliances and spar with their foes, all under a pretense of manners and protocol. The rest of their time is spent shopping (here and in the Market Ward), entertaining guests with grand banquets or expensive amusements, and taking holidays to

other worlds through the well-guarded and well-regulated portals of the ward.

The annual “holiday” called Grace is celebrated with a huge masquerade ball held in the fantastically large Palace of the Jester. All the social elite—and those wanting to see or be seen with them—attend this event. Over a thousand attendees appear at the yearly gala, which is hosted by a different family each year. Not surprisingly, each family attempts to overshadow those that have come before them, so each ball is larger and more lavish than the previous one.

◆ THE LOWER WARD ◆

If a body were to ask, “in which of the wards do the people of Sigil live?” the correct answer would be, of course, all of them. Nevertheless, about half the time, the answer’s likely to be “in the Lower Ward.” That’s probably for two reasons. The first is simply that the other wards are known for something other than residences—the Lower Ward isn’t. The second is that, depending on the body answering the question, the phrase “people of Sigil” might be significant. A typical Cager likely’ll have the prideful opinion that it’s the common folk, not the factols, the wealthy, or the warriors, who make up the City of Doors. It’s the common folk who live in the Lower Ward.

The ward is divided up into some of the most varied and interesting districts found in the Cage. Sure, the air takes some getting used to, the streets are dirty and dangerous, and folks here don’t always take well to strangers—but at least it’s not the Hive.

Plus, the border areas, like Swordhold or most of the Shattered Temple district, ain’t so bad. The air’s more breathable and the folks are reasonably friendly (still a little peery of strangers, though).

THE CHANT

If there’s a ruling power in the Lower Ward, it’s the chant. Rumors fly fast—even by Cager standards. What makes gossip so powerful here is the fact that in a place like the Lower Ward, where a body makes his living by the skill of his hands and toil of his back, reputation is very important. If folks think badly of a cutter’s work, he’s in a world of trouble, because that’s all he’s got. He is his work. Speak badly of either his character or his skill—it’s the same thing.

While keeping a basher’s reputation on the top shelf is important, keeping lanned to the chant on everyone else is just as important. A body does business with those he can trust—in or out of the Lower Ward. This makes a chant-monger’s job even more important in this ward than elsewhere. People gladly pay for the latest news. A chant-monger’s got to stay on his feet, though. Folks won’t give good jink to hear what the washwoman on the corner’ll tell them for free. Occasionally, information brokers down

on their luck take to giving out screed as true chant, just to keep the jink flowing. They always find their reward on the leafless tree quicker than most folks’d think.

THE GREAT FOUNDRY

The Great Foundry and the area surrounding it probably exemplifies the Lower Ward in most basher’s minds. Here, the air is thick with fumes and smoke and the streets, buildings, and even the people are covered in soot, sweat, and grime. It is a place of real work.

The Foundry itself is surrounded by an entire district that bears its name. The narrow, twisting, cobbled streets of this area provide homes for smaller forges and smithies, as well as support facilities, shops, and services for the folks who work and live here. A body won’t find anything fancy, just simple, well-made staples and such to fill the basic needs. And there’re plenty of taverns on Alehouse Row to quench the thirsts of the hard-working souls of the district.

‘Course, since the Great Foundry provides the Believers of the Source with their factional headquarters, the place

isn’t without its intrigues and conflicts. At least three different times in the last two years, some-

one has managed to sabotage the works in the Foundry itself. This was accomplished in such a way that

workers were killed or injured and production ground to a halt. Other factions, particularly the Dustmen and the Bleakers, were blamed but nothing could be proven. Some folks looked with a peery eye at the Anarchists as well.

Because of these mysterious attacks, security is high. Watchful guards keep visitors out and glance suspiciously even at the workmen themselves. The Godsmen high-ups tried to quell paranoia by reminding the faction members that this sort of thing is just part of the grand scheme, further honing each of them to perfection. While this tactic achieved some success, the high-ups also managed to attract a few peery eyes themselves.

Delegates and representatives from other factions and groups look clearly out of place coming to the Great Foundry—unless they’ve the brains to dress down a bit. The spies always know how to dress properly, but the *smart* spies strive for other assignments since infiltrating the Great Foundry usually involves a lot of hard labor as part of the cover. With the heightened security, the spies’ jobs have become more difficult and the risks they take much greater.

The Godsmen in the Great Foundry and the people of the Foundry District maintain a narrow outlook on life. They eat, sleep, and breathe craftwork and the products thereof (in some ways, very literally). Two types of bashers live in the Foundry District: the workmen and the artisans. Now, while

IT SMELLS AROUND HERE,
BUT IT’S MY HOME.

—WINGAR FINASH,
A TIEFLING
IN THE LOWER WARD

many'd say the workmen are indeed artists themselves, they gladly distinguish themselves from the artisans. The majority of workmen portray themselves as hardworking, straightforward cutters who value difficult labor, skilled work, and honesty. Mostly, the artisans are a secretive lot who spend their time studying (and hoarding) arcane and obscure crafting skills. They keep to themselves out of paranoia as well as arrogance. They produce some of the finest crafted goods a body's ever likely to lay eyes on, though.

THE SHATTERED TEMPLE DISTRICT

This area of the Lower Ward is quiet, serene, and—according to some visitors—a little spooky. The remnants of a once-gigantic temple dominate the district. This Shattered Temple, the headquarters of the Athar faction, is surrounded mostly by other ruins, although a few homes and a random shop or tavern stand in its shadows. Once a body stands a stone's throw away, the tightly packed edifices normal to a Sigil street resume. A careful eye notices that blocks and beams from the old temple went to raising the walls of a number of these buildings.

This area has now and again found itself haunted by spirits of the angry dead. Ghosts and hauntings rarely pose a problem in Sigil and on the Outer Planes, but here, long-dead memories of the past remain strong enough to conjure up poltergeists, apparitions, and other spectral vapors. These forces cause fear among the residents and sometimes real damage to local buildings. 'Course, the Athar won't let an outside priest near the area to exorcise the spooks. Their own priests of the Great Unknown can handle it just fine, they say.

THE GARIANIS FAMILY

In the Lower Ward's Central District, which stretches from the Mortuary (in the Hive) and New Market and down to Gear Run (almost to the Shattered Temple District, but not quite—which means it's not so central), the Garianis family holds sway. Now, these folks aren't golden lords like those found in The Lady's Ward, and they're not entirely a real family like some king and queen with their royal brood. Instead, they're a group of folks organized by their families under the actual Garianis clan to watch over the folks of the Central District and their interests. In exchange, the people give them money. Are they criminals? In the eyes of the Harmonium and the Guvners, yes. In the eyes of the folks of the Lower Ward, no. In fact, those they protect see them as heroes. Most gladly "donate" the protection money.

The Garianis family owns a number of taverns and businesses in their district outright. Starting another business, or even patronizing a direct competitor, in their area isn't a good idea. The family is powerful, pervasive, and, well...vindictive. Don't cross them, though, and they can be protective, nurturing, generous, and even kind.

Friar Muriov Garianis (Pl/♂ human/P12 [Hades]/Free League/LE) is the unchallenged leader of the family. As a young man, he left the family to work at a temple to Hades that revered the god's aspect as the power of wealth. He eventually abandoned that life and returned to his destiny. His numerous children all work in the family business in various ways. This powerful group has existed for many generations, its leadership passing down the ages through the most successful Garianis offspring.

There's no love lost between the Garianis and the city's authorities. The family avoids them with a great deal of garnish (a tactic more successful than the high-ups of the Harmonium and the Fraternity of Order want anyone to know), a well-honed system of subterfuge, good representation in the City Court (the best that money can buy), and most important, the cooperation of the people in their district. When the Hardheads can scrag a family member and make the charges stick, the Guvners are usually particularly severe in assigning the punishment. Strangely enough, the family's belief in their own sort of justice makes the Mercykillers fairly sympathetic to their goals, and unlike their allies they don't condemn the Garianis. Additionally, the family's obtained clandestine support from both the Free League and the Revolutionary League, just because of their opposition to their mutual enemy, the Harmonium.

OTHER NEIGHBORHOODS AND DISTRICTS

Butted up against the Foundry District is Little Bytopia, a squat full of gnomes and like-minded bashers who do their honest day's work, collect their honest day's pay, and go home without bothering anybody. Folks here like things the way they are, so don't go stirring up trouble. They don't abide it.

Gurincraag is a small neighborhood near Little Bytopia, though the residents rarely mix. Gurincraag means "dwarven mountain" in some Prime dwarf tongue, and it's probably someone's idea of irony. Though populated mainly by dwarves, this neighborhood reflects nothing of the grandeur of a dwarven mountain. The real dark, however, is that the squat is really a sort of "front," for the neighborhood extends down into UnderSigil to caverns of surprising elegance and majesty. The dwarves don't show their true dwellings to just anyone, though, and newcomers (even dwarf newcomers) see only the simple houses above the street level.

The unpopular neighborhood of Hellgate is situated around three neighboring portals to Baator. Chant has it that a single baatezu controls this neighborhood (a pit fiend whose name is said to be Mirshaz, though others claim it to be Fesneur). More likely, Hellgate holds a number of camps and strings of alliances all vying for power. The baatezu (and the mortals who like to live near them) can't ever seem to curb their love for politics and power struggles. It's worth

noting as well that more than one baatezu expert has expressed serious doubt that any pit fiends have taken up permanent residence in the Cage.

Situated not far from Hellgate but closer to the Great Foundry and the Shattered Temple is Gear Street, a modron squat. This incongruous slice of Mechanus right in the middle of the Cage catches some berks off guard, with modrons tottering from case to case, thicker than any other kind of folk. It's a welcome neighborhood, though, for in it a body can find all sorts of clockwork do-dads and well-made mechanisms. Better yet, while the modrons won't be cheated or haggled, they won't bob a basher, either. They've got their own security here, making it a safe little spot. Those with chaotic outlooks should plan on avoiding the area, though—they just won't fit in (and not fitting in is a crime to a modron...).

SOME HISTORY

Chant has it that long ago, the Lower Ward was called the Prime Ward. Newcomers settled here. That is, such folks were actually herded here by the Sodkillers or the Incanterium, then-extant factions that didn't want primes wandering around the city and getting in the way of their business. The Clueless lived here, at least until they figured out how to survive in the rest of the burg—which means of course that they weren't clueless any more. At that time, the ward took up about half of the area the Lower Ward does now, and a good deal of the area that currently comprises the Hive Ward.

Well, the restrictions placed upon the inhabitants of the Prime Ward caused what's now remembered as the Clueless Rebellion. While the name's got a humorous ring to it, there was nothing funny about what happened. See, the inhabitants of the ward discovered that the ward's doorways and arches had a proclivity toward portals leading to the Lower Planes. In defiance, the Clueless began activating these portals as often as possible, letting whatever they could into the Cage. Intelligent fiends knew better than to cause a lot of trouble in Sigil, but the Clueless also let in vast numbers of mindless monsters (and a lot of dangerous fumes and ill climatic effects). Beasts and horrors from the dark planes ravaged the Prime Ward and the surrounding wards until (it's said) the Lady herself took action. Many of the monsters disappeared, presumably into the Mazes but perhaps just back to the Lower Planes. The dabus did what they could to reverse the most terrible of the conditions, but much of the fumes and gloom remain today. The rebellious offenders were punished (got lost), but the restriction on Clueless movement through the city was lifted.

The preponderance of lower-planar gates caused the area to become known as the Lower Ward. Initially all but abandoned after the Clueless Rebellion, the area was slow to recover as folks gradually moved back to the area. When the Great Foundry was built in the center of the ward, it reinvigorated the area and encouraged bashers willing to put up with the conditions to set up their cases and their businesses here.

A DUNGEON MASTER'S VIEW OF THE LOWER WARD

BUILDINGS AND STREETS: Large tenements with sweeping, spiky roofs and bizarre, baroque complexes mixed in with common-looking village houses and buildings resembling those found on any prime world. The Lower Ward sets the standard for the Sigil mishmash of architecture.

Most of the narrow and winding streets are quite safe during the day. Canny bashers don't go out much at night, however.

NPCs: The common folk live here—the people who live by the sweat of their brows, the strength of their backs, and the skill of their hands. They love to talk and trade information, offering the best access to the latest rumors and secrets anywhere in the Cage.

The Lower Ward gathers the greatest cross-section of racial types in the Cage. Though the mix leans toward the darker side (with all the portals to the Lower Planes), celestials as well as fiends walk the streets—as well as everything in between. Githzerai, tieflings, and bariarua equal the number of humans, while elves, dwarves, gnomes, half-elves, modrons, and many other races are represented.

QUALITY AND PRICE OF GOODS: Beyond the simple staples of life (basic foodstuffs, simplistic clothing, and so on), the Lower Ward offers little. Prices are low, though, and quality is high in regard to durability and practicality—low in terms of aesthetics or elegance.

LOCATION OF AUTHORITIES: The Harmonium maintains a base near the Great Foundry on Alehouse Row to watch over the bubbers and troublemakers.

'Course, a few leatherheads out there still believe the Shadow-Sorcelled Key lies hidden somewhere in what was once the Prime Ward. This gate key, the stories go, was instrumental in the rebellion. Somehow, it can supposedly open all of the lower-planar portals in the ward at the same time. A frightening prospect, but probably just so much screed. Still....

LIVING IN THE LOWER WARD

Well, by most standards, life isn't great in the Lower Ward, but there are certainly a lot of worse places in the multiverse—and a good many of them are right here in Sigil. The inhabitants persevere through hardship and overcome the harsh conditions of their home with dignity and sometimes even good-natured attitudes.

Once a body's gotten used to the fumes and the stench produced by the forges, the portals to the Lower Planes, and

who-knows-what-else, things don't seem so bad. When the air clears a bit, the streets are frequented by numerous people going to and from their jobs or on the various tasks that make up an urban life. A washwoman might have a few moments to stop and wigwag about the latest chant with her neighbors, and a vendor might stroll by selling some dry, crusty bread (kept in a covered basket to keep the soot and grime off), but most folks are on their way to or from somewhere.

The natural gathering places are the taverns and eateries where a body can rest a bit and cool her hot, soot-filled throat with something wet and cold. Though sometimes rough and rarely pretty to look at, these Lower Ward establishments are filled with music, laughter, and up-front, matter-of-fact talk.

Even in their homes, the inhabitants of this ward make meal- and rest-time a communal, open affair. Many times,

multiple families share meals. The food they eat is rarely fancy, but it's usually hardy, filling, and well prepared. Most folks know a few tricks to keeping the harsh smells and filth from creeping inside, making their homes fairly pleasant, if simple and a little stark.

"Just because we live in filth don't mean we have to act like it," Lower Ward mothers tell their children. A body's more likely to receive a fair deal here than in The Lady's Ward, the Market Ward, or the Hive. Since cutters live on their reputations, they're apt to deal straight so that others will do so with them.

'Course, if this all seems a little too rosy a picture of a place known for its nasty air and portals to the Nether Planes, a body can always look at neighborhoods like Hell-gate or some of the seedier, darker places in the ward—the Styx Oarsman, the Tenth Pit, the White Casket, and the like. The influence of the Lower Planes is difficult to overcome.



◆ THE CLERK'S WARD ◆

"If wards was people, the Clerk's Ward'd be a real soddin' pain in the neck. Prob'ly a modron." So says Unger Fanax, an Indep tout. Not everyone shares this sentiment. It is, however, worthwhile to note that most folks think of mazelike offices, long lines, and stacks of forms to fill out when they consider the Clerk's Ward.

If a chaos-loving cutter thought he was free from the strictures of law and order when he left The Lady's Ward, he just doesn't understand Sigil. Looking for order? Never mind the Harmonium in the City Barracks or the Guvners in their Courts; just visit the Clerk's Ward (and fill out the proper forms).

Still, the comparisons of the two wards are obvious. The Clerk's Ward doesn't have the finery of The Lady's Ward, but it is just as clean, if not moreso. Hardhead soldiers keep the streets well patrolled. The orderly and well-kept buildings bear similarities to their neighbors. It's been said that the main difference between the Clerk's Ward and The Lady's Ward is that if a body finds the power behind the scenes in the latter, in the former he'll find the scenes themselves.

That is to say, the obvious political power of the City of Doors lies in the Clerk's Ward. Bashers come here when they want permission to do something, whether it's to put up a new building, start a new tout service, or bring a herd of Bytopian sheep into the Market Ward for sale.

The bureaucracy of Sigil loves to hand out licenses, and the Clerk's Ward is where a sod stands in

line to obtain one. That skinny berk behind the counter might prove nothing more than a moment's work on a battlefield to a trained warrior, but that clerk has the power to take away the warrior's right

to carry a sword, buy goods, or even walk the streets of Sigil at night if he wants, so the mighty hero's wise to treat him well. It just goes to show, a cutter can't judge a basher's worth by looking at him. Appearances, more than anything else, can be deceiving in the City of Doors.

More than just a place to apply for licenses and pay taxes, the Clerk's Ward houses the main legislative body in Sigil—the Hall of Speakers. These bloods make the laws and regulations, so they're to be respected. Nevertheless, that doesn't change how much power is really in the hands of the petty officials in Sigil. The administrators, the clerk supervisors, and the application officers all but hold a Cager's life in their hands. Because of that, most are as corrupt as Sigil is round, living far beyond their means on garnish alone.

Jink is the goal in the Market Ward, it's said, but in the Clerk's Ward it's the means toward the goal.

THREE HALLS

The Hall of Speakers, the Hall of Records, and the Hall of Information constitute the main bastions of bureaucracy in the Clerk's Ward. Spaced evenly on the white granite-paved Rook Street, these three complexes are the backbone of Sigil's day-to-day government.

A surrounding region of appropriate shops, services, taverns, and inns surrounds each of these Halls. For example, the area around the Hall of Information boasts some of the best bookshops in the Cage. Cutters interested in history, particularly the city's history, should definitely pay this district a visit. The Hall of Speakers has fine inns for visiting dignitaries and important bloods who wish to speak before the Council. Scribes and criers can also be found in abundance on the surrounding streets. The Hall of Records supports a number of busy clerks and accountants in the nearby businesses.

THE ADMINIS+RA+ORS' AND W@RKERS' DISTRICTS

Living conditions vary considerably between these two major districts in the Clerk's Ward. While the Administrators' District has many luxuries, the Workers' District provides few amenities. Both, however, maintain a clean yet drab appearance. The differences are much more evident to those folks living here, as opposed to visitors.

In the Workers' District, there's said to be a group of young dissidents plotting an uprising against the authorities of the ward. Rumors abound that the Revolutionary League supports these young firebrands, but this is untrue. In fact, the Doomguard backs them in their plots and efforts. This faction wants to see the Clerk's Ward brought down in flames, for they hate its pristine order.

The dissidents themselves want to create an egalitarian government that maintains equal treatment for all citizens. They consider violence to be an acceptable means to achieve this goal. Although they've taken no action as yet, their plans are wide reaching and incredibly destructive (probably due to the Doomguard influence).

THE FES+HALL DISTRICT

A body doesn't have to be a Sensate to appreciate the striking difference between the Festhall District and the rest of the Clerk's Ward. Among the bright colors and wild music of the Civic Festhall, cutters find members of the Society of Sensation attempting to garner as many experiences as they can.

The Hardhead guards patrol this area heavily, watching closely for any Sensate activities that might get out of hand and overly disturb or endanger the tranquillity of the



THE CIVIC FES+HALL
IS AN ISLAND OF C@L@R
IN A SEA OF DRAB.
—LILA FISSINA+HICUS,
A BARIAUR SENSATE

Clerk's Ward and its people. Fact is, the Harmonium's attempting to use legal channels to convince the Sensates to move the Civic Festhall to another ward—like perhaps the Hive. They claim that the Festhall so clearly fails to fit in with the rest of the ward that it should be relocated.

Little chance exists for Hardhead success in this matter. The Society of Sensation points out that the presence of the Hall of Speakers often creates and encourages as much of a disturbance as the Civic Festhall. Protests, debates, and arguments frequently spill into the surrounding streets (some start out there and never even reach the actual Hall).

LI++LE ARCADIA

Although the Harmonium maintains its strength in The Lady's Ward, a good many of its members live in a small neighborhood that folks have taken to calling Little Arcadia. The inhabitants make this a safe, if slightly bland, place to live. Armed militia, high walls, and strict local laws (like harsh curfews) help to protect and regulate the area. Unfortunately, they also keep out what the locals call "undesirables," which amounts to some hefty discrimination and prejudice.

Still, the streets are quiet and peaceful, the buildings are clean and pleasant looking (again, one might be tempted to use the word "bland"), and there's little for a body to fear—assuming the residents let him in.

If a berk's wandering the Cage looking to see celestials (the ones that every tout tells a body are in taverns drinking with fiends aren't as easy to come upon as the touts claim, in reality), Little Arcadia's not a bad place to try. Aasimon who come to the City of Doors with intentions of staying awhile often look for some little piece of home, and few places in the Cage remind a body of the Upper Planes. Devas, guardinals, agathion, and others can be seen mixing freely with the locals, though many tend to keep to a spot called the Silver Spire, a tower used as a meeting place and inn for celestials. Nobody really knows what goes on inside, because (as one disgruntled bariaur who was turned away put it) "if ya ain't got a pair o' feathered wings on your back, don't come knockin'." Only celestial beings can enter. Apparently, even most aasimar are politely turned away at the gate.

One more thing a bright basher'll note about Little Arcadia: It's not a safe place for tieflings and full-blooded fiends. Those who somehow find their way into this neighborhood for more than a brief visit never come back out. Fiends and tieflings usually just disappear, never to be seen again. Chant is a rogue asuras with a powerfully enchanted magical spear murders any creature with lower-planar origins. 'Course, it's not as if any blood in Little Arcadia's trying too hard to catch him....

THE SANDS+ONE DIS+RICT

The Sandstone District stands in sharp contrast to Little Arcadia, for it provides a home for many tieflings and even

a few true fiends. Where Little Arcadia is restrictive, the Sandstone District is open and free in regard to who can live here. 'Course, this also means that a few knights of the post and less desirable types call kip here as well.

In particular, a wizard called Tyrashyk of the Broken Wand (Pl/♂ human/M13/Fated/NE) lives in the district. He's rumored to capture sods in the umbra of night to sacrifice to some dark god of magic. Though Harmonium patrols only rarely wander into this area, the Hardheads have tried more than once to catch the spellslinger on his nefarious errands in the dim hours, but to no avail. Tyrashyk denies the chant, of course, and nobody can prove him wrong.

There's also a tiefling soothsayer named Chumbrai (Pl/♀ tiefling/P4 [Shekinester]/Society of Sensation/N), known throughout the neighborhood, the ward, and even all of Sigil as a particularly canny source of clairvoyant information. Chant is, some of the city's high-ups (administrators, crime bosses, golden lords, and even factols) come to ask Chumbrai questions about the ultimate dark: the future.

DAUGH+ERS OF +HE LIGH+

The Daughters of the Light is a loose confederation of people unified with a single cause. Now, it might sound that the group qualifies as a sect or a faction wanna-be, but that ain't the case. The Daughters of the Light exists only to put an end to the Revolutionary League. This pan-factional group has no official endorsement from any faction—it supports itself.

Why the Anarchists? Well, the Daughters of the Light's own literature goes something like this:

"Deep in the shadows, a group of evil conspirators lurks, plotting to overthrow your way of life, your governments and organizations, your family. These fiends lie, cheat, steal, and even murder to reach their goal, and that goal consists of nothing less than the complete subversion of all you hold dear. This group of criminals has a name: the Revolutionary League.

"They infiltrate groups, governments, and even families. They manipulate events through guile and subterfuge. Their agents are everywhere but never visible. The Revolutionary League is powerful, their tentacles reaching everywhere. Their agents are canny and cunning, yet subversive. Many of the leaders that you trust, the friends and coworkers that you associate with, and even the family members that you love are Revolutionary League agents.

"These self-proclaimed Anarchists preach freedom but want only destruction and the dissolution of society. Those among you who value your homes, your families, and your way of life will help us oppose these lying, thieving murderers at all costs. If they win, we all lose."

This organization was created to increase awareness of the Anarchists' activities with the hope that the "light of truth" would expose and dispel their shadowy operations. They also raise money by collecting from concerned (often-terrified) donors. This money goes toward printing more anti-League pamphlets. It also supports the reporting service. Concerned Cagers who suspect Anarchist activities are instructed by the Daughter's literature to report to them. The Daughters of the Light then investigates the report more closely, eventually turning over any leads and evidence to the Harmonium, the Fraternity of Order, and the Mercykillers (chant has it that they actually turn over this information to all of the factions, just to be safe).

The Daughters of the Light is based in the Clerk's Ward and uses an old butcher shop as its headquarters. Don't be fooled by the name—members of both sexes are involved, although the group was started by a small group of concerned mothers. While still small in size, the organization has managed to stir up a lot of paranoia, distrust, and outright fear in Sigil. While most folks had heard of the Revolutionary League before the Daughters came along, they'd never had the Anarchist's bad qualities laid bare before them. 'Course, not everything that the Daughters of the Light claims about the faction is true....

A body still might be asking herself, why the Anarchists? Couldn't a group have started up with an anti-Signer outlook, or to oppose the Guvners, or any of the other factions? Despite the fact that the Daughters claim no faction relationship (many of the members belong to factions, but none are above the namer rank), the answer is "yes." The Daughters don't look at the Revolutionary League as a faction to be ranked among the others but rather as an evil group of subversive agents and destructive murderers.

Nevertheless, some of the other factions are frightened rather than heartened by its success.

If the Daughters of the Light ultimately

proves successful, other faction mem-

bers wonder, what will stop it or some new group from turning on us?

It's also rumored that the Daughters of the Light exists as an Anarchist front spreading misinformation and false leads (as well as stirring up general interest about the faction). Such is the nature of conspiracy theories; once a body begins to lose his trust, he soon finds that he can't even trust those who convinced him to lose his trust in the first place.

A DUNGEON MASTER'S VIEW OF THE CLERK'S WARD

BUILDINGS AND STREETS: Official structures and authoritative halls dominate the ward, while residential areas consist of either large expensive homes or vast tenementlike structures. Few small, individual homes are found here, though row upon row of small clerks' offices and accounting firms are common. The streets range the gamut from wide and sweeping to narrow and winding, but all are clean and fairly safe.

NPCs: Administrative, sometimes bookish, folks live and work here. These folks work with numbers and words, not with tools—which means they're better educated than most Cagers. A few are quite wealthy, but most are not. Many Clerk's Ward residents have a mind-your-own-business approach to life, but sometimes a little garnish will loosen their tongues. The residents here know a lot of facts regarding the day-to-day grind in Sigil—who owes money to whom, who just applied for a permit for what, and information of that nature.

The Clerk's Ward's populace comprises humans, bariaur, and some githzerai and tieflings. Other races are found here less frequently, while planars like celestials, fiends, slaadi, and their like stay away.

QUALITY AND PRICE OF GOODS: There is little for sale here, and what can be found is overpriced and shoddy—although there are rare exceptions.

LOCATION OF AUTHORITIES: The Fated maintains its own small enforcement arm, based in the Hall of Records. The Harmonium has a garrison next to the Hall of Speakers.

LIVING IN THE CLERK'S WARD

Quality of life in the Clerk's Ward depends greatly on who a body is and where exactly she lives. Administrators in the Halls of Records and Information, officials from the Hall of Speakers, and high-ranking employees or business owners in the rest of the ward live very well. The lowly clerks, scribes, and other simple folk live no better than folks in the Hive—although the Clerk's Ward is quite a bit safer.

Folks here mind their own business and prefer not to get involved. Helping some berk, or even talking to him, will probably just lead to more work, or worse yet, the attentions of the high-ups. "Leave well enough alone, it's not my problem," crosses through these folks' brain-boxes almost continually.

In general, the Clerk's Ward is not the place to come looking for a good meal and fine entertainment. (The Fes-thall District ranks highly in both areas, though.) This is a quiet, drab ward for quiet, drab people. But maybe because of the lack of the other two luxuries, maybe because of some of the other aspects of the ward, a body'll find plenty of good bub here....

◆ THE GUILDHALL WARD ◆

Some folks can't tell where the Guildhall Ward starts and the Market Ward ends. "Isn't it all just the same?" they ask. Well, not really.

Although the ward derives its name from the guilds that once dominated the area, most of those have faded away. Now, the Guildhall Ward exists as a sort of domain of the middle class. Many of the merchants from the Market Ward—those not wealthy enough to live on Copperman Way but not forced to live in their shop or sleep next to their cart—live in the Guildhall Ward. Likewise, this ward houses many who perform services rather than just sell goods: craftsmen, cobblers, tinkers, tailors, leatherworkers, smiths, scribes, guides, masons, carpenters...and the list goes on.

GYMNASIUM DISTRICT

Not surprisingly, Ciphers constitute most of the population in this area. Most members of the faction live very close to their headquarters—and who can blame them, since they have free access to the luxuries of the Great Gymnasium! Surrounding this elegant structure are businesses that cater to the factioneers and others who come to relax or work out in the Gymnasium. Beyond that stretches a mainly residential area. It's generally an active, pleasant neighborhood.

'Course, the members of the Transcendent Order aren't without their problems. The latest chant reveals the existence of a murderer or group of murderers that preys only on Ciphers. It's taken the Harmonium awhile to come to that conclusion, but they're sure of it now. (The investigative arm of the Hardhead faction isn't their strongest one, and—in their defense—it's difficult to investigate a crime where the only similarity is the personal philosophy of the victims.) Because of this, the Transcendent Order has its own (illegal) patrols watching the district. Since the Ciphers tend toward jumping to conclusions and going on gut instinct rather than investigating clues or questioning suspects, these patrols have created a great deal of conflict on the streets of the Gymnasium district. Wrongful "arrests" and misguided vigilante attacks are commonplace now, and the real authorities don't have the manpower to stop them.

Worse, the murders continue. All concerned assume that more than one killer is involved since the methods and style of the murders vary so widely. Some folks theorize that the murderers use spells, while others claim that the killers have natural magical powers, like fiends or celestials. Still others say that the victims themselves are part of a spell, unwilling participants in some foul ritual or sacrifice to an evil god.

OTHER AREAS

In at least one respect, the Guildhall Ward is less cosmopolitan than the other wards of Sigil. A number of neighbor-

hoods are devoted to members of one particular race or background. There is no "official ordinance" requiring this segregation. Rather, it arose from folks wanting familiar faces and familiar surroundings in the unfamiliar maze that is the City of Doors.

One of the larger racial neighborhoods (or "squats") is the githyanki community known as Git'riban, or sometimes Githariban. The architecture here is distinctly githyanki—that is, baroque and ornate. Some folks are surprised by the number of githyanki in the Cage. Most figure that the bashers stick to the Astral, especially when there're so many githzerai about ready to put them in the dead-book. Well, while there're frequent skirmishes here and in the githzerai Hive neighborhood of Darkwell Court, and the githyanki really have to watch their step and move about the City of Doors in numbers, the chant is that most of those found in Git'riban are actually rogues who've fled the Astral, never to return. These outcasts and pariahs aren't talking when it comes to the whys and wherefores of their exile, but plenty of berks like to guess.

The elf community of Sigil lives in an area without a real name, although some leatherheads laughingly refer to it as the Forest. See, the elves who choose to live in the Cage aren't like most elves. Most of those folks could never stand to be cooped up in a grimy, dreary, lifeless city like Sigil. Those who can don't notice the conditions. Thus, their neighborhood is indistinguishable from any other part of Sigil, except that it's full of elves. It's a small squat—a street really, called Ritman Street by some, Long Lane by others.

The squat of Ghundarhavel—a neighborhood inhabited almost entirely by bariaur—is known to the locals by its real name (which means "home without grass" in their native tongue). Those who don't live here call it Hoof Park. This little community's taverns and eateries cater to bariaur tastes and accommodations. Shops carry bariaur clothing, armor, shoes, grooming tools, and other unique items. It's a pleasant enough place (as Cager neighborhoods go), but the inhabitants are surprisingly unwelcoming to those of other races.

Bordering Ghundarhavel near the Clerk's Ward lies a squat called Curly-Foot. Curly-Foot provides a home away from home to a fair number of halflings. While most halflings have a surprising adaptability (not unlike humans), they still prefer to live in familiar territory. Talun Underfoot (Pr/♂ halfling/F3/Transcendent Order/NG), a wealthy halfling from a world called Oerth, had a few tons of real Oerthian soil brought in (at tremendous expense), complete with sod. He then commissioned an actual burrow to be built (dug?) for him in the artificial hill that was created. It stands in the center of Curly-Foot.

A few years back, a tout new to the business sent a group of Clueless halflings to find a case in Curly-Foot. Unfortunately, these halflings were from a prime world called Athas. When the halflings from Athas attempted to eat the residents of Curly-Foot, it took virtually every local warrior to expel them from the neighborhood.

GUILDHALL WARD HIST+ORY

The Guildhall Ward once held the reigns of power in the Cage. While it still retains some vitality and importance (that is to say, it's not the slum that the Hive is), it has long since lost its grand qualities.

In days so long ago that most books don't even mention them, centuries before the Great Upheaval, the guilds of Sigil were powerful cabals of well-organized men and women. Back then, the numerous and splintered factions constantly and openly fought with each other, often resulting in warfare and chaos on the streets. In these dangerous days, the guilds were bastions of order, safety, and peace. A basher not part of the constant factional conflicts found protection and stability with the guilds.

Some of the more powerful guilds included the Stoneworkers, the Freeman (carpenters, masons, and roofers), the Leatherworkers, the Alchemists, and the Planewalkers. The Planewalkers were a guild of mercenaries willing to travel anywhere for the right price. (The guild's name became the name for all types of planar adventurers over time.)

After the Great Upheaval, when the factions were stabilized by edict of the Lady, the guilds fell on hard times. The people of Sigil clung to one faction or another, and the consolidated, more-powerful-than-ever factions saw the guilds as unnecessary threats. Many of the new or newly organized factions forbade their members to hold guild membership. Most of the major guilds fell apart soon after, leaving only a few of the more "innocuous" ones—the Innkeepers, the Touts, and so on. The Alchemist guild went into hiding, and the Planewalker's Guild left Sigil and relocated to Ysgard, on the Infinite Staircase. Most say that they disbanded soon afterward.

The Secret Society of Alchemy still exists today, and although the factions hardly notice the guilds anymore, it still chooses to remain hidden. These bashers maintain their expertise in magical study, herbology, and magical item construction. Some of them are wizards, while others are merely learned scholars. Although most folks don't even know that they exist, chant is that the Alchemists dabble in forbidden and dark magic, keeping obscure secrets and long-forgotten rituals that produce spells unlike any cast by contemporary wizards.

LIVING IN +THE GUILDHALL WARD

The Guildhall Ward possesses less of a unique atmosphere all its own than the other wards of Sigil. It's a mishmash of cultures and races, each attempting to keep its own identity. Somehow, it all fits together without creating the chaos and disorder of the Hive.

The Guildhall Ward celebrates a holiday four times each year called Harmony. This huge festival's origins and even meaning have been lost in the mists of time, but the

A DUNGEON MASTER'S VIEW OF +THE GUILDHALL WARD

BUILDINGS AND STREETS: The buildings of this ward run the range from tiny wooden kips to vast stone complexes. The types of buildings and streets vary greatly from neighborhood to neighborhood.

NPCs: The people of the Guildhall Ward are common middle-class folk, at least by Sigil's standards. They've often got a smattering of information pertaining to both the upper classes and the lower but are unfamiliar with the ways of the extreme of either end. Guildhall folk often have a good feel for history and many graybeards call kip here, particularly those with knowledge of the planes. This quiet ward also boasts the highest percentage of resident wizards in all of Sigil.

No one race is found more predominantly than the others, though the mixture here is the opposite of the Lower Ward. (While all planar races spend time in the Guildhall Ward, a body's more likely to see a celestial than a fiend.)

QUALITY AND PRICE OF GOODS: This ward is known more for services (tailoring, shoemaking, carpentry, masonry, and similar crafts) than for goods. Since the Guildhall Ward must compete with the nearby Market Ward, prices are low, but so are quality and selection.

LOCATION OF AUTHORITIES: An old fortress nestled among many of the old guild headquarters serves as an outpost for the Harmonium.

residents of the ward continue to celebrate it with great enthusiasm. Parties, parades, and revelries occur over a three-day period at the end of each third month. At night, bashers throw colored powders into torches and lamps, causing them to burn with red, green, or blue flames. The number of lights causes the Guildhall Ward to shine more brightly than any other place in the Cage at that time. Folks from all over Sigil come to celebrate the parties of Harmony, which means authorities and cross-traders both are out in full force.

◆ THE MARKET WARD ◆

As the name implies, the Market Ward holds the key to commerce in the Cage. Shops, warehouses, markets, and bazaars make up most of the ward. Merchants and their employees live here as well—and it's not too hard to find an establishment in which a body can obtain something to eat or a decent kip to sleep in, either. 'Course, with all the things to be bought in the ward, a berk won't have a difficult time finding a moneylender to extend her a big, fat loan—with a big, fat interest rate and the bruisers to back the 'lender up at collection time.

Merchants of the Market Ward range from wealthy and powerful bloods who own rows of warehouses and transport vast amounts of goods from plane to plane to simple street peddlers with rickety wooden carts that hold all their wares. Some items are imported from the remotest quarters of the multiverse, and some are made by craftsmen right here in the Cage.

Even with Harmonium patrols watching over the streets and shops of the ward, there's just too much money exchanging hands to expect the cutpurses, cony-catchers, muggers, and pickpockets to be far away. The established shopkeepers have minders to help protect them against thieves, while the simpler dealers have only their own wits and skills to protect them.

And the cross-trade doesn't stop there. Many of the criminals are organized into elaborate networks, organizations, and guilds. The authorities root these out when they can, but more often than not the thieving, fencing networks escape real punishment and actually supply a surprising per-

centage of the vendors. If a body's been bobbed in the City of Doors and he wants his stuff back, the best place to look is in the Market Ward.

But enough about all that. The most important things in the Market Ward are, of course, the markets and what a body can buy there.

FOOD AND DRINK

Most of the food that Cagers eat comes through the Market Ward at some point. Even if a cutter doesn't buy his food there, chances are that the local vendor in his ward or the restaurateur that he bought the food from dealt with a Market Ward vendor.

Almost any sort of foodstuff can be found here, but the really rare comestibles are sold first-come, first-serve (usually at a high price) and only when available (in season). A few examples of the more interesting kinds of food and drink are presented below.



Arborean wine: This extremely expensive wine (130 gp per bottle from most sources) is made from giant grapes that grow on the plane for which it's named. Actual giants pick and crush the grapes, thus raising the price. For those unaccustomed to its potency, this wine intoxicates anyone drinking it twice as quickly and as completely as most other wines.

Bytopian cheese: This cheese comes in three types, blue, red, and white. Made from goat's milk, these unique cheeses have a flavor unlike any other. Each costs about 1 gp per pound, with the price of the blue cheese often exceeding twice that during the night (at night, the blue cheese glows in the dark and gains a much tangier, spicier flavor).

Fire fruit: Shipped directly from the Elemental Plane of Fire, these delicacies burn with a soft flame while fresh. If a body douses the flame only right before eating, their taste exceeds virtually any other fruit. Left extinguished, they spoil in just a few minutes. Vendors keep them in special containers and serve them with tongs. They're tempting, but beware—this fruit is utterly deadly to all but the most fire-resistant beings. Each costs 2 sp.

CLOTHING

Everybody needs clothing—the Harmonium's pushed laws through the Council of Speakers requiring it, in fact. The Market Ward features shop after shop with clothing and cloth, as well as leather goods, furs, shoes, hats, jewelry, and miscellaneous accessories.

Chillfoot boots: Developed by a halfling cobbler right here in Sigil, these useful leather boots seem useless—even detrimental—on first glance. Somehow, they harbor an unnatural cold conjured from some icy waste. Basically, any berk who puts them on gets very cold feet. The boots are too uncomfortable to wear for much longer than half an hour normally.

However, if worn in areas of great heat, that same berk can walk over red-hot surfaces and even through flames without any harm coming to him—or at least to his feet. While the wearer's not fireproof by any means, he can safely resist any damage normally incurred by touching hot surfaces with his feet (such as in Khalas on Gehenna). These boots cost 130 gp or more (depending on where a body buys them).

Fishskin suit: This suit stitched from ichthyian hides allows a cutter to swim through water smoothly and quickly. It comes complete with webbed gloves and fins for the feet, increasing a body's swimming speed by 50%. A tailor-made suit with accessories costs 225 gp.

Living cloak: Chant is, this thing comes from the Prime somewhere. While it looks like a normal, thick fur cloak, it's actually alive. When worn, the cloak clutches tightly (not painfully or restrictively) around the wearer. Coupled with

OH, YOU CAN FIND
ANYTHING HERE
IN THE MARKET WARD.
THE QUESTION IS,
WHY WOULD YOU EVER NEED
SOME OF THIS STUFF?
—ENKILLO THE SLY

the "creature's" own body heat, this cloak is about the warmest piece of clothing in the multiverse—at least, that's what the vendors say. They charge 60 gp for the cloaks, and only a few merchants in the ward know where to procure them.

Solanian shoes: On Solania (a layer of Mount Celestia), these climbers' shoes allow a blood to scale even vertical inclines safely and without fear. Elsewhere in the multiverse they aid a climber by adding 5% to his chance to scale any surface. Market Ward vendors won't let these useful items go for less than 300 gp.

Zadisband: This simple novelty item looks like a regular leather headband or armband, but it has a unique feature: It continually hums a soft, melodic tune. While most bashers grow tired of the humming eventually, they make wonderful—if often-recycled—gifts. Each costs 8 sp.

EQUIPMENT

Often, planewalkers make the Cage their base of operations. To do their jobs (which can vary greatly), planewalkers need equipment. Beyond all the normal things that adventurers need, Sigil's Market Ward offers the following rarer items (in addition to many, many others).

Bytopian bottle: By utilizing some law of nature on the plane of Bytopia, the gnomes who live there are able to make bottles that can store two different liquids without the liquids ever mixing. They come in all shapes and sizes but generally cost around 15 gp. They are widely available.

Celestian rope: The spiders found on Mount Celestia are metallic things of gold and silver (and can themselves be purchased for 2 gp each in the Market Ward). They spin a gossamer silk that's virtually transparent and very strong. This silk has a variety of uses, one of which is to make strong and lightweight rope. Vendors usually charge about 1 gp per foot for this rope, which has the strength of a normal chain and is almost invisible.

Clearsteel shield: Clearsteel is a mineral found only on Acheron. There, they use it to make (what else?) weapons and armor. While the weapons are simply novelties, many a blood has seen the practical need for a transparent shield. These shields are available from many armorers in the Cage and cost twice as much as shields made from more common metals.

Hiter chain: Lengths of chain from the Baatorian city of Jangling Hiter are the finest in the multiverse, bar none. Durable, rust-free, and lightweight, this chain puts others to shame. Each foot of chain costs 10 gp and weighs 1 pound.

Mandorian stone: In the Grand Bazaar, careful shoppers can find a small cart owned by a short, stout woman named Finn. Finn sells polished stones of all types, a few made into pieces of jewelry or set into ornate boxes. She also sells something she calls Mandorian stones, although she

won't reveal their source. These grayish-blue rocks come in one, two, and five pound sizes. When struck sharply, these stones become immovable in space, able to support up to 100 times their own weight. Striking them again negates the effect, in which case they seem like normal stones until struck again.

There's a tea-house garden in the Guildhall Ward where the steps up to a secluded loft consist only of Mandorian stones. Canny bashers take soft, careful steps up those stairs.

As a strange side effect, these stones give off an eerie moaning sound when wet. No one knows why.

Voidmarks: Vendors selling these claim that they come from the plane of Vacuum—hence the name. However, more than one graybeard has taken the time to investigate and prove this to be false. Voidmarks come from the portion of the Outlands known as Tir na Og, where they just call them marker bits.

These chalklike sticks can be used to make invisible marks on things. The marks made by the chalk can only be seen through special dark lenses or magical means that normally reveal invisible objects. Cross-trading bloods use voidmarks to indicate future targets to their comrades by surreptitiously marking their clothes. Shopkeepers use them to mark prices or secret notes on their merchandise. Planewalkers use them to mark paths through the wilderness, mazes, or whatnot.

If a body buys a stick or two, he shouldn't forget to buy the lens to see them. A stick costs 8 sp, while the 3-inch by 3-inch handheld lens costs 5 gp (and it's not good for anything but seeing voidmarks).

Water-torch: Using a process developed in Limbo by the githzerai, woodcrafters in Sigil have developed a way to treat wood so that it will burn even when wet. In fact, the wood burns even when submersed in water. Unfortunately, the treatment process requires some rare chemical mixtures and about six months, so each water-torch costs 8 gp.

LIVING CREA+URES

In certain parts of the Market Ward, a body can't even hear her own bone-box rattle due to the screeching, braying, roaring, and chittering of the animals for sale. It might surprise some folks that a metropolitan city like the Cage offers a livestock area, but it's true. Merchants herd animals into the city through a portal, sell them, and then the new owner herds them right back out again through his own portal.

Although prospective buyers can find virtually any kind of beast (even some rather deadly monsters) for sale in the Market Ward, those presented below are some of the more interesting specimens.

Astral streaker: These birds hail from the Astral Plane. They're intelligent and have excellent homing instincts, making them wonderful messengers. Small bits of paper or cloth can be tied to their legs. If treated well, they become

fiercely loyal. Each sells for about 3 gp—they're fairly common around Sigil.

Trained ethyk: Dragged from its home on the plane of Bytopia, this lemurlike creature has the ability to alter the moods of other creatures. Unfortunately, an ethyk always alters it for the worse, making others more aggressive and contrary. In the wild, the ethyk uses this ability to encourage predators to become aggressive toward other prey, for the object of the ethyk's powers never directs its aggression toward the ethyk itself (handy, that). Some folks like to have these beasts around, for trained ethyks can be made to increase the aggression in others, directed away from both ethyk and master. In the debate-heated confines of the Hall of Speakers, for example, it's handy to deflect an opponent's ire at another—which is exactly why they're not allowed in that building....

In any event, most trainers sell ethyks for around 150 gp. These beasts understand simple one-word commands but only accept them from someone that they've been around for at least a week. After a few months of additional training, they can be taught simple tasks such as retrieving small items, tying knots, warning of intruders, and so on.

MISCELLANEOUS

Jewelry? Yes sir. Transport? No problem. Musical instruments? Of course. The Market Ward can fill any need that a body has—no matter how varied or strange.

Baatorian lute: First off, any leatherhead knows that the baatezu aren't known for their music. Nevertheless, an observant cutter found a box of interesting instruments called Baatorian lutes as she went through the cart of a peddler who'd gone to the dead-book. A member of the Fated, she was processing his belongings for tax purposes before the Dustmen carted it all away. In any event, it seems that these lutes were originally crafted by an erinyes (this determined through some careful research and a *legend lore* spell) and sold as extras. They have no special powers per se, but they produce sounds unlike any previously heard by mortal ears. The Fated sold the lutes to a merchant in the Grand Bazaar, so they are once again available to the public. The curiosity value has forced the price to rise considerably. No one will let one go for less than 450 gp.

Githyanki jewelry: The githyanki produce gold and silver gem-studded jewelry of all sorts: necklaces, earrings, bracelets, and everything else. Not only are they ornate and wonderfully crafted, but they also possess an interesting property. Whenever the wearer's name is spoken within one mile, the jewelry tingles. Apparently, each piece is somehow psionically attuned so that it mentally "reads" the name of the wearer and then scans the surrounding area. While not terribly useful, this intriguing power jacks the price of the jewelry (usually worth from 500 to 5,000 gp for the material and craftsmanship alone) up 500 percent.

Jandor's Music Boxes: Not a thing, really, but a place, Jandor's has a wide variety of musical boxes. These elegant devices bear the precision of something from Mechanus and the beauty of an art object from Elysium. Each is different, but all of them seem to be a steal at 80 gp. The thing is, nobody knows the dark of where they come from or who makes them—and Jandor (the owner) is keeping his bone-box locked. The real dark? Jandor's a polymorphed nalfeshnee, and the boxes each contain the essence of a tanar'ri warrior ready to materialize and pounce when Jandor gives the word. The moral? Let the buyer beware.

HIGH WEIRDNESS

Sigil's the self-proclaimed center of the multiverse (what place ain't?). Because of its unique position and easy access to virtually everywhere else, a body exploring the Market Ward can stumble upon some very strange things. Some of this odd, miscellaneous stuff is magical, while some is just weird or rare. A few examples of such high weirdness are presented below. (The DM is encouraged to throw a strange or wondrous find the PCs' way once in a while—if they've really looked hard.)

Clockwork pets: More than likely, these things originated on Mechanus or the gate-town of Automata. These iron contraptions are designed to resemble normal domesticated animals—dogs, cats, birds, and even fish. Clockwork pets function in every way that a normal trained animal would, except that they don't need to eat or sleep. None of them seem capable of combat, either.

Most clockwork pets seem created for aesthetic value, as they are incredibly beautiful. Many produce wonderful music by "singing." Depending on the materials used in construction, clockwork pets cost anywhere from 1,000 to 8,000 gp. Favored among the golden lords of Sigil, they're only obtained in an upscale clockmaker's shop called Divinities.

Memory crystal: A vendor who worked out of Girreht's Jewelcraft once sold these crystals. (At the time he said he was a friend of Girreht's, but now that he's gone the githzerai claims to have no memory of him.) He apparently had an entire box of them, but no one knows for sure if he managed to sell them all.

These memory crystals are a little like thought recorders (see below), but instead of being able to store the image of a thought, the small, finger-sized crystals can store a memory. The memory is preserved in exact detail (and is completely accurate—it's what really happened, from the recorder's point of view) and can be "replayed" by anyone holding the crystal. The memory will never be more than ten minutes long, but once stored in a crystal, it lasts forever.

A monastic deva visiting from Elysium reportedly rattled her bone-box about the crystals being from an order of psionics sequestered deep within that plane. They call the crystals Fir-annads. Another source, however, claims that the crystals come from Pandemonium and are used by fiends

A DUNGEON MASTER'S VIEW OF THE MARKET WARD

BUILDINGS AND STREETS: Though visitors might see streets filled with rows of shops of every imaginable type, the typical architectural archetype in this ward tends to open markets filled with stalls, stands, carts, and booths brimming over with product. Although the streets are safe against physical harm, smart bashers keep a peery eye out for pickpockets.

NPCs: Merchants. Period. The Market Ward is a good place to introduce the vast range of Cager merchants, from haughty import kings to lowly peddlers and everyone in between. Although most like to chat over a purchase, folks here are more interested in money and products than information. Nevertheless, many of the traveling merchants in this ward carry with them news of other planes and worlds.

Since everybody needs to buy something sometime, every type of basher in the multiverse can be found here at some point. Some folks come to Sigil for no other reason than to shop the Great Bazaar for its incredible selection and availability of goods.

QUALITY AND PRICE OF GOODS: Obviously, in a place like the Market Ward, quality and price can vary considerably. Those who want to pay less can either hunt for bargains or settle for less-durable, lower-quality merchandise (but sometimes a body doesn't need anything better). On the other hand, those willing to pay a bit more can find an "improved" or "advanced" version of virtually any item. Overall, prices of common items are slightly lower than average due to the great availability, but bargain-hunters should remember that a body gets what he pays for.

LOCATION OF AUTHORITIES: The Free League attempts to keep the Harmonium out of the Grand Bazaar, but the Hardheads still maintain a garrison on Copperman Way.

to trap the fleeting memories of barmy petitioners, which are then used to torment the poor sods. This mysterious source says the crystals have no name. Obviously, the crystals are similar to, or perhaps related to, the recorders found in the Sensoriums of the Civic Festhall. It's said the Sensates'll buy up any of these crystals they find, if for no other reason than to keep the recorders unique.

Thought recorder: Andar Colis found one of these in a stall in the Grand Bazaar, under a stack of ceramic plates commemorating the inauguration of some long-dead prime king and a box of lute strings. A few others have surfaced in Sigil, but no one has any idea where they came from originally.

A thought recorder is a flat copper plate about six inches to a side. If pressed to a basher's temple for five minutes (or more), the image of what he was thinking about

appears slowly on the plate. This image remains permanently, or until a new image is placed upon it. The image never reveals more than what the user imagines, even if what the berk thinks is wrong, untrue, or unrealistic.

THE GRAND BAZAAR FROM THE INDEP'S VIEW

"Sure, the Grand Bazaar is a great place to pick up some trinkets, buy some food and bub, and try on a new hat. However, it's also the 'headquarters' of the Free League. How's that work? Not too well, if the Free League was an official sort of faction with offices, applications, and the rest of that screed. But we Indeps aren't like that, so it all works just fine." So says Kalo Seth, an outspoken Indep who works in the Grand Bazaar and loves it. Kalo's a successful artist who sketches caricatures of folks in the plaza of the Bazaar.

His less-successful friend Jomatt isn't quite as enamored of the place. "It'd be nice to have someplace to go to get away from the crowds, like the other factions," he says.

Chesfur, a bariaur smith, adds, "Oh, I'm always telling Peeping Jomatt (that's what we call him around here) that he should just quit complaining. The Indeps aren't even a faction. If he wants some fancy headquarters and a bunch of berks behind desks telling him what to do, he should join the Guvners."

"There's just no place else to be," Kalo states. "It's good for business and it's a good place to be free of the strictures of the rest of the Cage."

LIVING IN THE MARKET WARD

For the most part, only the folks who work in this ward choose to live here full time. Other cutters who come here to do business stay in the various inns on a temporary basis. The general feel here is one of self-sufficiency. "Watch your own back, berk," remains a commonly heard catchphrase.

In the neighborhoods of the rich merchant "kings," a body might think he was in The Lady's Ward. Walking down Copperman Way, a cutter sees well-kept and well-guarded manors, wide newly paved streets, and ample-bellied merchants riding in sedan chairs carried by muscular soldier-slaves. Much of the rest of the ward, where the business is done, is a crowded cacophony of peddlers, hawkers, consumers, sightseers, and beggars, not to mention Hardhead patrols, entertainments that entice shoppers to come to one store or another, and the frequent arguments that break out when haggling escalates out of hand. And that doesn't even begin to include the livestock and other animals for sale, which are actually more pungent than loud. Yet folks in the Market Ward live as well as work here. Many shopkeepers live right in their stores (or above, or behind...) and peddlers and vendors live in tiny hovels set up close to the markets and bazaars.

Although the Market Ward doesn't have several well-defined districts like the other wards, the Warehouse District is a distinct area with rows upon rows of storehouses. Guards maintain a constant vigil, though (as usual) most are not immune to a little garnish.

If anything rules the Market Ward, it's jink. Forget the Harmonium, the Council of Speakers, or even the Lady herself. Money is the real power here. Everything is for sale. Everything. Not just goods, but information, loyalty, justice, public opinion, reputation—even religion. If a body likes money, this is the place to be. Folks who don't twig to such level of commercialism should complete their business and move out fast.

◆ THE HIVE WARD ◆

Firahar's book on the Hive Ward describes it as a cooking recipe: "Cram thousands of cross-traders, numerous fiends, and a variety of monsters into a small, rundown area. Sprinkle liberally with impoverished sods and diseased beggars. Top off with some of the barmiest berks in the multiverse. Serve."

He doesn't paint a pretty picture, but it ain't inaccurate, either. The Hive is the slum of Sigil, though newcomers often jokingly point out that it's hard to tell. 'Course, after they've spent some time in the Hive Ward, *then* they're able to tell.

The Hive is everything bad about Sigil, but doubly so. Infested with thieves, cutthroats, fiends, and creatures most folks'd label monsters (orcs, trolls, goblins, khaasta, reaves, mephits, and much worse), the Hive's a dangerous area. Garbage litters the street, and rats and other vermin nibble on corpses before the Dustmen can arrive to cart them away to the Mortuary. It's a grim, dismal place of pain, fear, and poverty.

THE DEAD DISTRICT

It's no secret that the Dustmen run the Mortuary in the Hive. They're a fairly quiet faction, rarely causing trouble for others (though the chant says that they might have something to do with the problems the Godsmen are having). The real dark is that they quietly run the entire Hive Ward.

The Dead District (the area around the Mortuary) is probably the cleanest and safest place in the Hive. The streets have better lighting, and folks walk them with little fear. 'Course, it being next to their headquarters, it's not surprising that the district's thick with Dustmen. However, the poor sods who live here know that "the eyes of the Dead watch everything in the Hive." The Dustmen faction directly or indirectly controls much of what occurs in the ward. Some say that they even gain a percentage of all money made, legally or illegally, in the Hive.

The dark grows deeper. The rumored reason why they exert such control over the Hive, which they've actually done for centuries, is twofold. First, to raise funds to support a dire master plan. Factol Skall, it is said, desires to convert

THE NICEST+ THING
A BODY CAN SAY
ABOUT THE HIVE
IS THAT THE DECAYING
BODIES DON'T+
LAY ABOUT THE STREETS
+EE LONG.

—RE+HOLLEN,

GI+HZERAI

everyone in the
Cage over to
his way of
thinking
by per-
suasion
or by
force.

And the easiest
way to convert sods by
force is to put them in

the dead-book itself. Second, if there's going to be a "mass conversion," his forces need a staging ground, and the Hive is conveniently free of most Harmonium patrols and nosy Fated tax collectors—even the dabus usually steer clear of the slum.

The visible result of all this is that wise bloods living in the Hive quietly toss a little jink in the cart when the Dustmen corpse collectors come by. It's either that, or suddenly discover that there's room for one more on that cart tomorrow. The inhabitants of the Hive have all heard that a secret order of Dead assassins exists to punish those who won't cooperate with the faction or who actively counter their plans. No one seems to know anything more about these shadowy killers, however.

THE CHAOS DISTRICT

The Xaositects have their headquarters in the Hive, too. Do they know about the Dead's supposed plans? Maybe. Maybe not. Who can tell? And even if they did, would they care?

The slum called the Hive, as opposed to the entire ward surrounding it, functions as the Xaositects' headquarters—as much as they have one. It's also known as the Chaos District. Visitors to this neighborhood should be ready for anything. *Anything*. The Chaos District is a jumble of falling-down buildings, hastily raised hovels, and winding streets (some which go seemingly nowhere) filled with cacophonous sounds, smells, and sights. No one building serves the faction as a base. Rather, the Xaositects just hang out in the neighborhood, so it's the place folks go if they want to find them.

THE MADHOUSE DISTRICT

Only the Bleakers seem to take any initiative to make the Hive a better place. The Bleak Cabal runs a number of soup kitchens and shelters for those who have nowhere else to go. Their headquarters, the Madhouse, takes in those barmies who just couldn't handle their lives any more. There's a certain appropriateness to the fact that in Sigil, when a body has sunk to the utter bottom and has no where else to turn, she can always look to the Madmen for solace.

The district around the Madhouse is wide and open—unlike most of the Hive. A body's likely to encounter a number of ragged urchins, crippled beggars, and wretchedly poor sods here, hoping to garner help from the Bleakers. The

screams and wails of madness from the Madhouse itself set the mood on edge in the district, but the barmies, at least, are all safe inside.

Chant has it that the Bleakers built a number of underground entrances to the catacombs below the city. Some say that the Madhouse is full, and now they throw the inmates into the deep warrens below, while others say that the Bleakers have it in their heads that there's something important down there to find. Other versions of the chant say that it was the barmies inside who dug down and out, and now their keepers follow the madmen down there to bring them back. Whatever the case, rumors abound of search parties exploring the reaches under the Madhouse.

THE DITCH

The Ditch is a hideous trench ripped through Sigil like a giant scar, dividing the Hive from the Lower Ward. Some maps put the Ditch in the Lower Ward, but it really fits in the Hive—it's a water-filled gouge filled with trash, offal, and dead bodies. Certainly *sounds* like it belongs in the Hive. Despite the horrible and clogged waters, the Ditch holds a number of portals and thus many bashers use it as transport to other planes or gate-towns.

Occasionally, a special portal to the River Oceanus opens to fill the Ditch and purge its foulness with pure, sparkling water. When this happens, folks on both sides drop whatever they're doing to bathe in and drink the refreshing water. A few berks claim that they've developed systems for predicting when this occurs, and one barmy's even sure enough of his formula to propose that a scheduled official holiday be declared so that people are ready for the deluge. The real dark is that the dabus have access to the Oceanus portal and its key. They purposely open the portal repeatedly, letting in the river's water. Their motives are beyond understanding, let alone prediction, so the berks with the systems are spouting screeed.

THE SLAGS

The Slags are a small, isolated area of the Hive Ward that lies in ruin. Chant has it that a Blood War battle spilled over into Sigil once, and the devastation it caused resulted in the Slags. There're still quite a few fiends scattered throughout the area, so it's an easy story to believe—and some bashers claim that the portal which let the battle in is due to open up again. Soon.

Many horrible tales come out of the Slags, but none is more frightening than that of the self-proclaimed King of the Slags. This being (reports conflict as to whether he is a nycaloth, a nalfeshnee, or an obese tiefling) reportedly demands tribute from anyone it comes upon as it wanders the Slags. The tribute is in the form of virtue—the King demands that its "subjects" perform some evil act for it. This could mean striking a friend, stealing food from the poor, maligning some good power, or even worse. The King of the

Slags possesses a great deal of might to back up its demands, and it's also got a lot of evil thugs and minders that follow it in the shadows, ready to strike when it calls for them.

Creatures not tolerated in other areas of Sigil call kip in the Slags. Monstrous humanoids most often found in Acheron—orcs, goblins, hobgoblins, and the like—live in nomadic camps that move around the ruined wasteland. A lower-planar native like a night hag, hordling, or gehreleth is as likely to share the street with a body as a human or bariaur. Now, such creatures are occasionally found in other areas of Sigil, but in the Slags they act as if they own the place. It may be that they're no more common in the Slags than anywhere else, but the lack of normal or upstanding folk in comparison makes it seem like there're more of 'em.

⊕+HER AREAS

Darkwell Court's ominous name serves to scare off cross-traders and undesirables more than anything else. The neighborhood's inhabitants, a large community of githzerai, live in the Hive because it's isolated, not because they're poor. The githzerai have made this area uniquely their own. Gone are the sweeping gables and iron spikes found on most Sigil buildings. Here, the walls are smooth, the roofs are flat (sloped a little so that water doesn't collect), and the architecture is plain. By some standards, the place is drab and unimaginative. By other standards—githzerai standards—it's a little slice of home. An ancient githzerai woman named Divin Anesh (Pl/♀ githzerai/M10/Athar/LN) living in the Court's said to be the high-up. Apparently, nobody makes a move in the neighborhood without her, and all githzerai in the city pay their respects to her (or at least they should).

Surprisingly close to Darkwell Court is Khaasta Row. Creatively named, a number of khaasta have taken up residence on this short street. Since most folks don't twig to these lizard-men (some cutters have a problem with raiding and kidnapping), they hole up in this tiny slum and keep mostly to themselves.

A bunch of primes from the world of Athas have settled a small section of the Hive that they call New Tyr. Most of these bashers possess rough qualities and excel in fighting and survival skills. Most don't like githzerai or githyanki, either, so canny members of either race stay far away.

Refugees from a dying prime-material world called Ranais settled in the Lower Ward centuries ago, but the neighborhood, called Goatswood, has since shifted into the Hive with the ever-changing borders and definitions of the two wards. These folks are fairly good natured as well as long-suffering, making the squat a friendly one—particularly by Hive standards.

LIVING IN +THE HIVE WARD

Might makes right in the Hive. Personal power and toughness overshadow all else—politics, jink, information, or even

A DUNGEON MASTER'S VIEW OF +THE HIVE WARD

BUILDINGS AND STREETS: This is the ultimate slum. The buildings here have either collapsed or are well on their way to ruin. Various kips have been cobbled together, but no one puts real effort into a Hive building because nobody cares, and because everyone knows it won't last long anyway. The streets run down narrow and serpentine paths, with numerous alleyways and shadowed spots for gangs, muggers, and worse to wait in ambush.

NPCs: The poor and the criminally inclined call kip in the Hive, but usually not by choice. Not everyone in the Hive is a criminal, but it's safer to not give the benefit of the doubt. Folks here focus their energies on survival, so if a basher wants information about something other than the general goings-on in the Hive, he should look elsewhere.

The Hive is one of the few places in Sigil where humans aren't the major segment of the population. There're still a lot of humans in the Hive, but when a body adds together all the githzerai, tieflings, bariaur, half-elves, humanoids, fiends, and monstrous races, they seem insignificant. A player character's not likely to run across a celestial in the ward unless it's on some mercy mission.

QUALITY AND PRICE OF GOODS: Low and low. There's little for sale here but junk scavenged or stolen from others by those desperate for a few coins.

LOCATION OF AUTHORITIES: The Harmonium maintains two small bastions on either side of this sprawling ward, one in Ragpicker's Square (which is technically in the Lower Ward) and the other near the junction of Pride and Stump street, just within the unofficial borders of the ward. Truth be told, however, the only authority in the Hive is a body's own might.

belief. But like anything else, toughness is a commodity. A basher can buy the right weapon, trade for the best spells, or hire out his trained sword-arm. Might is the currency that people trade in here—in fact, bloods looking for the best mercenaries or the strongest guards come to the Hive.

With might comes two other important components to success in the Hive. A good head on a cutter's shoulders is one, and a good healthy dose of fear is the other. Nowhere in the Cage do the Clueless last a shorter length of time than here. Ironically, a lot of portals to the Prime Material Plane are located in these slums. Canny bashers learn quickly what's what and who's who in the Hive. This information is one of the keys for survival in Sigil's slum.

But fear? Powerful bloods don't fear anything, right? Wrong. Folks who live in the Hive know that somewhere—maybe just behind that crumbling wall over there—lurks something more powerful than them. Knowing where not to

go, when to run, and who not to disturb may have been learned out fear, but most bloods maintain that such knowledge ranks right up there with knowing their own name in importance. The Hive weeds out traits like overconfidence and bluster through something akin to natural selection.

Day-to-day life in the Hive remains rather dreary. Most of the sods living here spend their time simply trying to remain alive—looking for food, procuring jink, and fending off enemies. The lucky few hang on to their jobs as best they can, while the others operate as scavengers in an urban wilderness. Few bashers stop to wigwag on the street. No one looks for beauty or grandeur—luxury here is a full belly.

The Hivers socialize behind closed doors in dimly lit and poorly ventilated taverns where the bub is cheap and the mood is dark. Even the toughest bashers from outside the Hive find such places rough. The night's entertainment could proffer a fight to the death or merely some bawdy tales, but a body never knows.

With the recent talk of a "babble fever," though, many Hive residents keep their distance from their fellows for fear of contagion. Babble fever is the name given by locals to a plague making its way through the Hive. Bashers say that the disease renders a sod into a blathering idiot who can't shut his bone-box before it sends him on a winding, painful path to the dead-book. It's not a good way to die by anyone's reckoning, even—it's said—by the Dustmen.

The Hardheads patrol the Hive occasionally, but a body's actually more likely to find a group of Mercykillers hunting criminals here. "We see eye to eye with people in the Hive," one Red Death member relates, "because they understand that if you do wrong, you pay. No courts, no arguments, just punishment. Justice." Nevertheless, only a fool or a barmy would really expect justice in the Hive—even the Mercykiller patrols are rare. Survival of the fittest remains the closest thing to justice most folks see. So really, the cross-traders and other criminals have no fear of "getting scragged." In fact, in the Hive, most folks don't think in terms of criminals and laws. A body does what he needs to do in order to get by. Any hesitation comes from the thought of retribution from the berk he's bobbed, not the law that may catch up with him later.

Still, joy is not unknown in the Hive, and neither is laughter. Cagers are a tough lot, and the Hivers are the toughest.

◆ UNDERSIGIL ◆

First off, nobody calls it UnderSigil. That's such a Prime name. Folks just refer to it as "down below," "the catacombs," "the Realm Below," or even "the labyrinths" (but never the Mazes—they're something else, berk). 'Course,

IF YOU THINK
SIGIL'S A DIRTY,
DISGUSTING,
DANGEROUS BURG,
MY ADVICE WOULD BE
TO TRY TO AVOID
UNDERSIGIL
AT ALL COSTS.
—TARSHEVA
LONGREACH

UnderSigil's very existence begs the question: What's Sigil made out of that berks can dig down into it? Well, some graybeards have (seriously) devoted their lives to researching the answer to that very question, and they came up with this:

No one knows.

Any dwarf can tell that it's not stone. It looks a little like stone, though, and it's about as hard. While a basher needs a pick, a shovel, and a good strong back to

carve his way through it, unlike stone it's not good for building, shaping, or anything else. Once broken from the main mass, the chippings become crumbly and brittle like bits of a dry rice cake. That's why folks have to ship stone, wood, and other materials through the portals to build anything in Sigil. Whatever material comprises the torus itself, it's useless for making anything but dust.

So when folks refer to the dirt streets in a particular district or the soil on their boots from walking around the Hive, they're talking about the dust that comes in through the constantly opening portals, the detritus of long-since crumbled buildings, and the cast-off grime from the beings that have lived in Sigil since who-knows-when. The Cage doesn't have dirt or soil in the earthy, plant-a-tree-and-watch-it-grow sense. Not unless it's been shipped in at great expense, that is.

In any event, the labyrinthine catacombs that run under the streets and buildings of the City of Doors provide Cagers with an endless mystery to discuss over meals or a flagon of ale. See, some bashers think that the catacombs aren't really down there at all. Can't be, they claim, because there's no "down there" for them to occupy. These folks believe the entrances to the catacombs are really keyless portals and the tunnels and chambers actually exist on some other plane—not unlike the demiplanes where the Lady makes her Mazes. As corroborating evidence, these chant-mongers offer up the fact that whenever a body digs down real far, instead of reaching the outside of the ring of Sigil, he just disappears. Sure enough, this seems to be the case. No one's ever tunneled all the way to the outside—not even close.

In fact, ask a graybeard and he can't even tell how thick the torus really is, not with any grain of surety. No one knows that little fact either, though it sure seems like an easy enough question. (For a place that people have lived in for millennia, Sigil still presents a surprising number of mysteries.)

Most folks don't twig to the whole other-plane explanation of the catacombs. If it looks simple enough, they say, don't muddy the waters. In Sigil as well as on the planes, when something doesn't need a strange theory, don't attach one to it. But if that's so and the tunnels and passages are nothing more than what they seem, then where exactly do the dabus go, and why can't a cutter follow?

For a cold glass of cheap bub, Rhemmy the Fetcher tells folks about his excursions below the streets of Sigil. The canny ones know not to believe everything he says, but as his bone-box rattles on and on, a body begins to picture what's going on beneath his feet. There's a Sigil that no one knows about and that no one sees—a secret city below the City in the Center of Everything.

"C'mon, c'mon. Don' be shy," Rhemmy says, his breath thick with a briny bub-stench, waving over anyone who will listen. I walk over. "Some folks'll tell ya I do nothin' but spout off screed. But jus' for today—not later, but jus' today—I'll give ya the real chant. The true and complete tale of ol' Rhemmy's adventures in the down below.

"Issatruth. I weren't no sword-swingin' hero. No. Nope. Not me. They call me the Fetcher, an' that's because I fetch things for folks. You tell ol' Rhemmy whatcha need, and I'll fetch it. See? Get it? Anyhow, one day this here berk tells me he's got somethin' for me to fetch for him. It fell down a hole, he says. One of them narrow sewer holes inna street—you know. Well, I knew. And this wasn't just any old thing. This berk wants ol' Rhemmy to fetch a magic watchacallit...wand. Fell down the sewer when he was scrappin' wit' somebody." Rhemmy reaches for the glass in front of him and drains it, looking at me. As I order another from the barkeep, he continues.

"Anyhow, I found a way down there, under the street. It was a ways away from where that wand fell, so I had to do some wanderin' to tumble to how to reach there. Whew. Such a stink. Rats, too. Lots of 'em—but I had with me a lantern and a good stout blade, so I wasn't too worried. Most of the critters ran from me.

"Now, I'm a good fetcher. Let me tell ya that right off so nobody gets the wrong idea. But I ain't had a lot of experience wandering around in tunnels in the dark. I've heard there some prime bashers what do it all the time, but not here in the Cage, right? So, I ain't ashamed to say that ol' Rhemmy got a bit turned around. Somehow I ended up going down real deep, figuring them tunnels would start headin' up again any minute. Eventually, the lantern runs outa oil, and there I am, who knows where, inna dark."

Rhemmy goes on for a while about the horrors of being alone in the dark. Yes, well, anyone who's been to Pandemonium knows what darkness and horror really are. Eventually, he gets back on track.

"There were things down there, see? Monsters like I ain't never heard tell of before or since wit' mouths and arms and sewage-covered tentacles. Little things scurried through the tunnels and scurried through my mind. I thought I'd gone barmy. Yet, where it was drier, there was folks livin' down there. Called themselves darkers and they lived without light. Some were thieves and murderers, but some were alright. They helped ol' Rhemmy find his way out—three days I was down in there and s'true, when I came up I was in a completely different ward than where I went down. Never did find that magical whatzits.

"Course, now, don't be thinkin' bad of Rhemmy, 'cause that were the only thing I ain't never been able to fetch. If you got somethin' you want fetched...."

Having learned all I could from Rhemmy, I wander out of the tavern. Yet I can't help but look down, and wonder what lies under my feet.

—Faragoh Naeil, narrator

THE DABUS WARRENS

When folks refer to the Dabus Warrens, they're talking about the mysterious places where the dabus go below Sigil's streets, not the tunnels they use to travel there. The distinction is important, because a body can walk down into the tunnels. They make up most of the known area down below. However, nobody follows the dabus into their own cases. Their little hidey-holes, cathedrals, plazas, or whatever they are remain inaccessible to nondabus—if they exist at all.

Most people assume that the dabus live somewhere. They certainly vanish down into the tunnels once they're done with their work, and a body'd assume that means they're going home, or going back to their headquarters, or their base, or whatever it is that they have. And if they weren't going somewhere secret, why won't they let folks follow them?

Of course, as always, folks have different theories. As said before, Cagers like talking about UnderSigil, so there's lots of chant (and screed) to be heard about it. Maybe the

dabus disappear through hidden portals in the catacombs that lead to their secret, otherplanar homes. Maybe they protect their warrens with powerful magic so that only they can find their way. Maybe they go down into the catacombs to the hidden sanctuary of the Lady herself, and it's her will that keeps other berks out.

It's all just speculation when it comes to the dark of these bashers. It's true though that explorers in the tunnels under the city often suddenly come upon a dabus on its way back up or as it comes down. Following always leads into the blinds, but it sure makes a body wonder.

TRAVELING UNDERGROUND

Now, why folks would want to go into the Realm Below is their problem. Some bashers like to poke around in strange places, while others might have a need forced upon them by circumstance (if a Mercykiller's quarry goes down below, then the cutter's probably going to follow).

A basher's first step to exploring the catacombs under Sigil entails figuring out how to get there. Fact is, it's not too difficult. There're more entrances than a body might think. The easiest entrance, although not the most pleasant, lies through the sewers. Explorers willing to wade through the muck and sewage don't have to wander too far (a few hours is usually enough) before they come upon a mysterious passage or even a door leading away from the drainage tunnels and into the labyrinths. These passages usually lead down pretty fast—a good indication that a body's entering the catacombs.

RA+S

'Course, a cutter wandering around in the sewers has a good chance of running into other unpleasantness beyond just dirty water and filth. Like any sewer, Sigil's drainage system is a home for rats and other foul vermin. In the Cage, however, a pack of rats might be able to warp a sod's mind as easily as swarm over him with vicious little bites. That's because Cager rats sometimes turn out to be cranium rats, which are much, much more dangerous than normal rats (even the big ones that grow as large as dogs).

Folks who've wandered through the sewers and through the labyrinths tell chilling tales of tiny underground kingdoms ruled by vast networks of cranium rats. No one knows much about them, but sometimes whispers circulate about four different groups of the creatures called the Four Great Minds. These groups war with each other and work at cross purposes, sometimes utilizing mind-shackled slaves to attack or thwart the others.

Sewer rats in Sigil have big, bipedal cousins known as wererats. They also travel through the sewers, but they have their own warrenlike tunnels as well. (And here's a warning to those who might enter their kips—wererats love nasty, deadly little traps, usually involving terribly sharp spikes,

blades, and poison.) Chant has it that most live in and around the Ditch (many tiny passages extend from the sides of the Ditch into the Realm Below) under the thumb of a shadow fiend named Tattershade. They can be found elsewhere, though, and are known to kidnap children and helpless sods, dragging them down below with hopes of ransom. If that doesn't work, the victim usually becomes a meal—so either way, the wererats win.

DEAD AND DARKERS

Slipping through an old crypt is another way into the labyrinths. To many, this path is even more distasteful than traveling into the sewers. Crypts aren't all that common in the Cage, since most folks don't bury their dead here. The Dustmen cart them away, or else the Dead take the dead through a portal and bury them someplace nice. Some people like to keep their dead nearby, though (who knows why?) and so they dig down below their cases and put them in shut-up rooms below the streets. Sometimes the diggers run into the catacombs already in place and a new connection is made. Sometimes, though, things in the catacombs dig their way up into the crypt. It's a little-known fact that ghouls live below the streets in certain wards (the Hive and the Lower Ward have the worst infestations). It's an even lesser-known fact that these ghouls aren't the undead kind. These poor, raving souls that look, smell, and fight like ghouls are really living sods who've developed a taste for corpse flesh.

Ghouls aren't the only worry for a basher who defiles some deader's crypt. Lots of the places are cursed, sending tomb raiders (or just those passing through) to the dead-book in the most horrible manner. Peery berks put traps and wards on their tombs as well, and of course, some are said to be haunted by deaders who just don't want to leave.

Lucky bloods find entrances to the labyrinths that aren't so dangerous. For example, the Twelve Factols, a tavern in The Lady's Ward, offers access to the catacombs. The Gurincraag neighborhood in the Lower Ward is rumored to have numerous entrances to UnderSigil. Many ruined buildings, particularly those found in the Hive, act as fronts for entrances into the catacombs (like the Bones of the Night by the Ditch). Folks called darkers sometimes maintain these street-level egresses. Darkers live in the Realm Below by choice. Criminals, madmen, or just folks with nowhere else to live, these people have adapted completely to an underground lifestyle, coming up only at night to scavenge, steal, or sometimes just to spy on those living "the old way," as they put it. Some never come up, living out their entire lives belowground.

Darkers hate intruders from above. Those with a criminal bent fear retribution from authorities. (In fact, their fears carry a certain amount of validity, since the Harnonium has been known to ruthlessly purge underground areas suspected of harboring criminals.) Others just resent and fear

folks who can live “up there.” Their communities usually comprise only a few dozen souls, but some of the largest hold hundreds of individuals. Darkers keep their own mysterious sets of laws, codes, and manners, and have even developed their own cant. ‘Course, even among these outcasts, there are outcasts—some of whom have become monsters that prey upon the darkers themselves.

DUNGEONS AND...WELL, MONSTERS, ANYWAY

The Realm Below essentially exists as a network of interconnected tunnels and chambers. Because Sigil ain’t what a body might call “natural,” there are no native caverns or anything like them. Everything was put there for a reason by somebody, although the reason and the somebody might both be long gone and completely forgotten.

The upper levels include the sewers, crypts, and dungeons directly underneath the streets and buildings above. (Supposedly, a lot of the High Houses in The Lady’s Ward harbor deep and extensive dungeons underneath them to hold prisoners, slaves, and Lady-knows-what-else.) The dabus tunnels, wererat passages, and narrow vermin warrens connect them all and extend downward. The darkers live in lower areas branching off from these passages, in

tunnels of their own making or in old, forgotten avenues created for long-lost purposes.

Would-be adventurers, treasure seekers, and monster slayers should keep in mind that hundreds of miles of underground tunnels (and connected chambers) fill the Realm Below, and most of them are empty. Those going down just to wander and see what there is to see quickly grow bored. Cutters are better off with a destination or a goal in mind.

The tunnels usually don’t grow much wider than 10 feet across, with much narrower passages found more often. There’s never any light, ventilation is very bad, and unless a body’s poking around the sewer or nearby passages, everything is very dry. The dust-choked air filling most tunnels decreases visibility, even for those who brought magical light—it makes for difficult breathing, too. Most folks find that down below they can only exert themselves to a degree about half of normal before they need to rest.

Collapsing passages offer another danger. For whatever reason, Sigil’s not always perfectly stable (graybeards claim it’s got something to do with all the portals). “Cagequakes” occasionally shake things up on the street level. These events present a deadly threat to the catacomb dwellers. During a ‘quake, falling debris inflicts 3d4 hp damage upon anyone in the affected underground area (saving throws versus breath weapon reduce damage by half, secure shelter reduces damage by half or to nothing with a successful saving throw).

Thankfully, such events are rare and usually quite localized.



The rat hadn't returned for months—is that what bothered him so? No, no, he'd grown used to his loneliness during the first few hundred years in the cell. This felt more like an itch inside his skull, a ticklish rustle,

as if his brain-box struggled to shake loose a particularly unpleasant thought. It'd grown worse over the last few weeks. He dug his nails into his scabby scalp, groping, but pulled out only brittle clumps of long, bone-white hair. He looked at them and giggled.

HOW IT BEGINS

Suddenly, the itch became a dozen white-hot nails searing his brain. The old barmy cried out and shut his eyes against the pain, but with the fire came secrets. He remembered then what was about to happen out there, in the forgotten city beyond his cell. It was time.

"You must set me free! It is happening again!" he screamed, smashing his stained fists against the stone walls of his dark hole again and again.

"Do you hear me? I am the Chosen One! It—is—happening—again!"

◆ BACKGROUND ◆

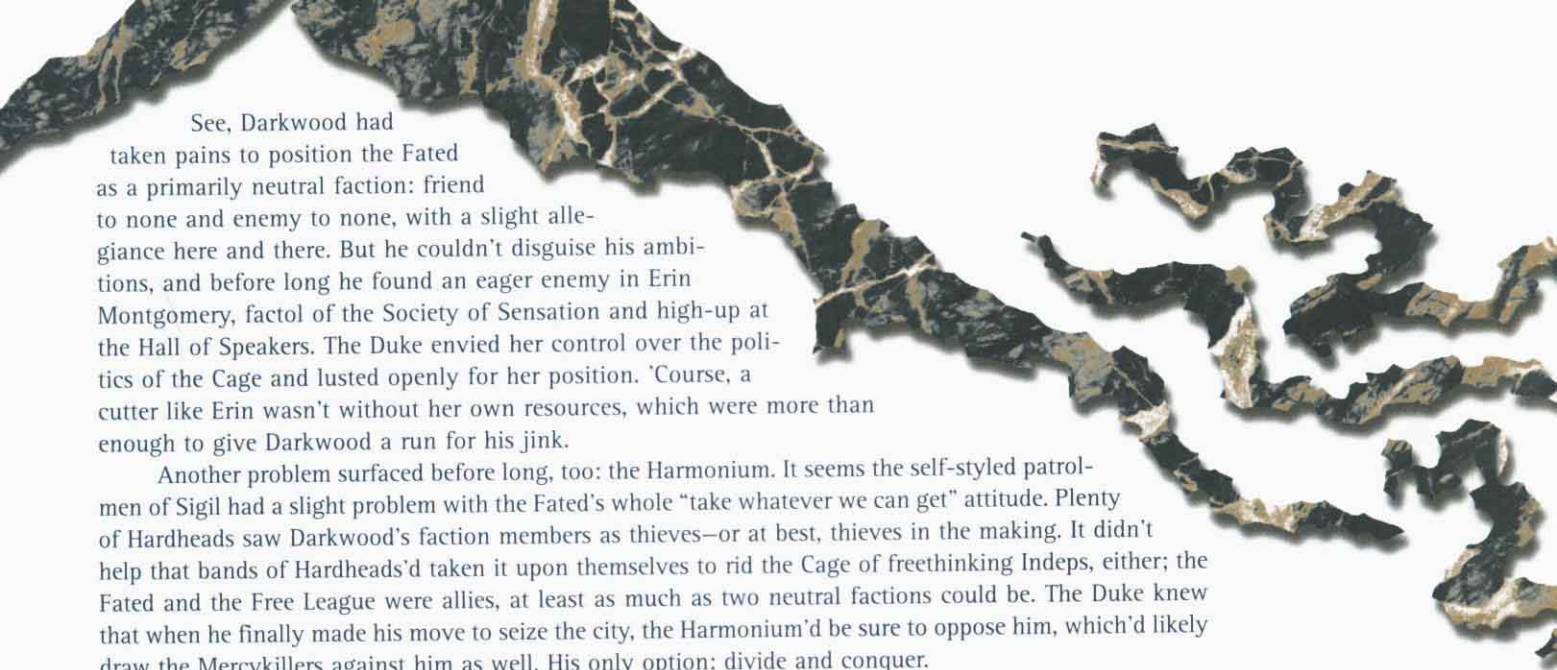
Some berks kick around Sigil practically their whole miserable lives, tossing the chant, ducking the Harmonium, and maybe getting the sweet end of a deal now and again. But they just live day to day, their sights set on little else but a bit of jink or a bite to eat. They never seem to rise above what they are, never try to chase a dream and make it real—that is, if they bother to dream at all.

And then there're bloods like Duke Rowan Darkwood, factol of the Fated.

Almost from the first moment he set foot in the Cage, Darkwood knew what he wanted. His goal was simple, really: total control of Sigil. He looked around and saw that the factols held the titan's share of the power in the city, so he set out to become one. It didn't take him long; fact is, he replaced Emma Oakwright as the leader of the Fated so fast that most folks whispered of skullduggery. Truth is, he just pored through dusty tomes until he found a few skeletons lurking in Oakwright's closet. But Darkwood didn't care what the chant said about him. He knew how to grab power, but more importantly, he knew how to *keep* it. He could wield it like a scalpel or a club, whichever got the job done better.

'Course, command of a faction didn't make him master of the Cage. The Duke had a dozen or more other factols to contend with, not to mention a few leaderless factions—and a small thing known as the Lady of Pain. The Lady he'd save 'til last, since he considered her an unknown entity, a wild card. Oh, he knew that one day he'd stand against her, that they alone would fight the final battle for the heart of Sigil, but he also knew that he wasn't ready yet. So he set his underlings to digging up the dark of the Lady, in hopes of finding something to use against her. And then he turned his attention to foes more easily understood—and defeated.

IT'S TIME.
—ROWAN
DARKWOOD



See, Darkwood had taken pains to position the Fated as a primarily neutral faction: friend to none and enemy to none, with a slight allegiance here and there. But he couldn't disguise his ambitions, and before long he found an eager enemy in Erin Montgomery, factol of the Society of Sensation and high-up at the Hall of Speakers. The Duke envied her control over the politics of the Cage and lusted openly for her position. 'Course, a cutter like Erin wasn't without her own resources, which were more than enough to give Darkwood a run for his jink.

Another problem surfaced before long, too: the Harmonium. It seems the self-styled patrolmen of Sigil had a slight problem with the Fated's whole "take whatever we can get" attitude. Plenty of Hardheads saw Darkwood's faction members as thieves—or at best, thieves in the making. It didn't help that bands of Hardheads'd taken it upon themselves to rid the Cage of freethinking Indeeps, either; the Fated and the Free League were allies, at least as much as two neutral factions could be. The Duke knew that when he finally made his move to seize the city, the Harmonium'd be sure to oppose him, which'd likely draw the Mercykillers against him as well. His only option: divide and conquer.

DIVIDED THEY FALL

Taming the Red Death proved easy. All the Duke had to do was win the heart of their 19-year-old factol, a somewhat barmy (and romantically gullible) tiefling named Alisohn Nilesia. Darkwood promised her everything—love, a grand wedding, and a place at his side when he ruled Sigil—in exchange for the support of her faction when the shoe finally dropped. Now, a body might wonder why the Mercykillers'd follow a tiefling's lead, but Nilesia'd gained a large number of fiercely loyal factioneers, what with her intense focus on justice and her harsh sentencing "reforms" that sent criminals to the leafless tree by the hundreds.

Darkwood's got a plan to keep the Harmonium and the Sensates distracted, too. First, he'll slip word to the Hardheads that the Doomguard're preparing to start a war in the streets of Sigil, a war they'll wage with illegal and dangerous items they've been stockpiling at the Armory. As a story, it ain't half bad, given that the Doomguard did practically the very same thing about 600 years ago (just after the Great Upheaval, when all the surviving factions were struggling for direction). At the same time, the Duke'll warn the Doomguard that the Hardheads are about to raid the Armory and seize the city's cache of weapons for their own personal crusades. After that, it'd be simpler to make peace between a balor and a pit fiend than between those two factions.

What's more, the Doomguard and the Sensates're natural opponents as well. The Sinkers relish the decay of the multiverse, while the Sensates live for experiencing all the cosmos has to offer. Normally, that wouldn't be enough to go to war over—not even in Sigil—but with a violent berk like Pentar in charge of the Doomguard, who knows what might happen? Darkwood figures that once the Sinkers're all wound up over the Harmonium, it won't take much to get them to run riot over at the Civic Festhall as well.

'Course, the Duke realizes that the Doomguard won't fight well if they're stretched too thin, so he's arranged to give them a little help. Through the canny placement of spies and chant-mongers, he'll persuade cell leaders of the Revolutionary League to join the Doomguard and end the oppression of the Harmonium once and for all. It won't be a tough sell, after all, not with the Anarchists sworn to destroy all factions. The Sensates, too, will burn in the flames of revolution—an incidental casualty, perhaps, but a welcome one nevertheless.

Now, Darkwood's no addle-cove. He knows that his plan won't bring about the total annihilation of the Harmonium or the Sensates. But the two factions *will* be far too busy fending off the Sinkers and the Anarchists to offer much resistance to his bid for power.

LOVE AND DEATH

Does Rowan Darkwood truly adore Factol Nilesia, or is his declaration of love just a ploy to exploit the young tiefling? The topic's kept many bone-boxes in the Cage rattling for some time now. Nilesia herself wholeheartedly believes that her suitor has nothing but the best intentions, and she'll scrag any berk who she hears whispering otherwise. The Fated don't know what to make of the relationship, but most figure that, at worst, it's a marriage of convenience, a chance for two separate groups to unite and enjoy greater power.

Sadly, neither's the case. Darkwood feels nothing for Nilesia but contempt, and he plans to ensure that their union lasts only as long as is necessary for him to gain control of the Mercykillers. Fact is, he confided his ambitions in the young girl and led her to believe that they would rule Sigil together. All he would need from her is support from the Red Death. The tiefling agreed to his terms, under one condition: that he marry her. This he promised to do, in a lavish but private ceremony. And soon after the wedding, Nilesia will inform her most loyal troops that they should follow Darkwood's word as if it were her own.

Unfortunately for the bride-to-be, the Duke's just biding his time. As soon as Nilesia's top bashers swear loyalty to him, he plans to kidnap the factol and sell her into fiendish slavery on the Lower Planes—a fitting end, given that she so enjoyed doing the very same thing to many a hapless prisoner.

Meanwhile, Rowan has convinced the faction's second-in-command, a noble paladin known as Arwyl Swan's Son, to step up his movement to roll back Nilesia's stringent and unpopular sentencing guidelines. The Duke's told Arwyl that he's doing it for the good of Sigil, and that he wants to keep their little project a secret from his beloved for now. He also backs Arwyl's plan to release unjustly jailed sods from the Prison.

'Course, his "good deed" ain't the act of charity it seems. Darkwood's done his research, as always. He's found a dozen or so prisoners—seasoned murderers, all—who're known to have strong grievances against certain high-ups in Sigil. The Duke plans to quietly slip these killers out along with the rest of the freed prisoners, then sit back and wait for them to fulfill their vows of vengeance. With any luck, the berks'll put enough high-ups in the dead-book to sow even more chaos and confusion. Why, they might even kill off a few cutters who would've otherwise stood in Darkwood's way!

AT LAST, THE LADY

Darkwood suspects that once tensions erupt between the Doomguard, the Harmonium, the Revolutionary League, and the Sensates, other factions will join the fray, fighting for or against their favorite sides. And that suits him just fine—a disturbance on that scale is sure to draw out the Lady of Pain. Not even the most ale-soaked Cager would purposefully set out to attract the Lady's eye, but the Duke's just a prime, after all. Sure, he's spent a few years in Sigil, but he's never really moved beyond viewing the Lady as an obstacle to be overcome, a foe to be vanquished. Darkwood believes that his plan will

force the Lady to appear on the streets of the Cage, at which time he'll confront her—and blast her into oblivion.

Mere arrogance or full-blown stupidity? It's hard to tell. But the Duke figures that he has (or rather, will have) an ace up his sleeve. One of his many chant-diggers found a reference in an old book to a formidable spellslinger who, eons ago, challenged the Lady of Pain—and nearly defeated her. Apparently, the Lady couldn't destroy him, and only managed to ensnare the usurper's spirit in an impervious gem that she cast out of Sigil, some say to the Lower Planes. Over time, this legendary jewel came to be known as the Labyrinth Stone, for it was said to house a psychic maze through which the wizard's spirit would forever wander. The book went on to note that another mage, Shekelor, left Sigil about 10,000 years ago on a public quest to find the gem, a mission that ended in his hideous death.

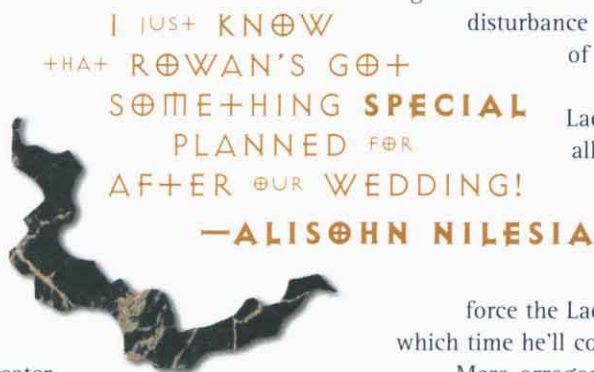
That kind of news'd turn most folks away, but it gave Darkwood an idea: obtain the Stone himself and use its power against the Lady. After all, if she could have slain the mage, she would have, right? Thus, she must be vulnerable to the blood's awesome magic. If he could only release the wizard's spirit in Sigil, the Duke might at last command power enough to bring down his greatest foe.

So Darkwood's had his diggers studying the problem for years—practically since the first day he became factol of the Fated. They've read every word ever written about the Lady, listened to every tale-spinner who claimed to know a piece of the puzzle, and sent bands of adventurers to comb every patch of dirt that might hide the prize. But it seemed as futile as trying to climb the Spire.

Until they found the gem.

TO THE MAZES

Shortly before the adventure begins for the player characters, Rowan Darkwood finally gets his hands on the gem containing the ancient spirit. Bashers in his employ stumbled across it while exploring a recently opened passage in the fourth layer of Pandemonium, rumored to have been created by the thrashings of a dying god. The Duke realizes that



I JUST KNOW
ROWAN'S GOT
SOMETHING SPECIAL
PLANNED FOR
AFTER OUR WEDDING!
—ALISØHN NILESIA



At long last, he can set his plans in motion: peeling the Harmonium and the Doomguard, setting the factions at each other's throats, marrying and kidnapping Nilesia, and gaining the confidence of Arwyl Swan's Son.

These tasks accomplished, the Duke finally prepares to destroy the ebony gem and release its prisoner.

He looks forward to a face-to-face confrontation with the Lady. Unfortunately for him, she's not the type to float down the street and challenge him to a duel—she simply tosses the pest into the Mazes, *without* the precious Stone. It stays

behind in Sigil.

'Course, Darkwood always expected to face the Mazes someday. Truth is, he's almost glad it happened, as it seems to confirm that the Lady *does* fear the release of the wizard's spirit. But he's prepared.

THE FATE OF THE FACTOLS

The Duke ain't the only sod thrown into the Mazes. Other factols share his fate. See, the Lady of Pain decides, finally, that enough's enough. The faction high-ups've held the reins of the City of Doors for a good long while, and more blood's been spilled in their names than in most anything else (except the fiends' Blood War, of course). It's time for them to go.

Is it a coincidence that the Lady starts whisking away the factols just as Darkwood manipulates the Cage to the brink of war, or does the latter event lead directly to the purge? It

doesn't really matter. All that's important is that most of the factols will be gone by the time the PCs start adventuring in Act I.

This fact's not public knowledge, though. First of all, most of the factions keep the disappearances quiet—it's not the kind of news that helps build morale. Second, those who do know about the vanishings tend to blame the faction tensions that seem to be swelling rapidly in the Cage. Are the high-ups falling victim to assassination plots and other skullduggery? Have they withdrawn from Sigil to hold a secret conclave of leaders? Are they simply in hiding from emboldened enemies? The chant's smeared all over town, but no one really has the dark of it.

Actually, in some cases, the chant's not far from the mark. Factol Nilesia—who's been sold to fiends by Darkwood—is spared exile to the Mazes, and a few others either

THE FACTOLS?
ALL COME DOWN
WITH THE PLAGUE, BERK,
SURE AS MY NAME'S
SENBAR.

—A CHANT-MONGER
NAMED YUIN

it is, indeed, an object of immense power, but he's not sure what kind—or how to tap it.

His top graybeards aren't much help, so Darkwood spends many a day simply concentrating on the gem, trying to contact the wizard within. While he doesn't exactly succeed, his mind fills with strange, fleeting images: something about ancient magic, a trap set but never sprung, the destruction of the Lady, and the twisting of Sigil itself. The Duke also gleans the method by which he can destroy the gem, thus providing the prisoner with an exit from the maze. But he senses resistance from within the Labyrinth Stone. Has the old spellslinger been trapped for so long that the idea of freedom terrifies him? No matter—Darkwood's determined to set him loose and steal his power.

leave the Cage on their own or fall to more mundane attacks. That could be why the Lady doesn't imprison them in her desolate labyrinths: She knows that they'll play no part in the brewing war.

For details on the fate of each factol, see "The Factions," below.

THE OLDEST BARMY

Shortly after he came to Sigil, Darkwood realized he would eventually find himself in conflict with the Lady. He learned that she consigned her rivals to the Mazes, and so he hired a prime mage to construct and cast a carefully worded *wish* spell. (Why a prime? Because Rowan knew no planar wizard would accept the contract knowing it involved the Lady of Pain.) The *wish* stipulated that if Darkwood ended up in the Lady's Mazes, the magic of the spell would lead him unerringly to the correct portal out of the Maze and back to Sigil.

Upon finding himself in a Maze, Darkwood calls on the magic and finds the doorway out. But the Lady's will cannot be so easily thwarted. The sod appears in the halls of the Gatehouse, the asylum run by the Bleak Cabal—500 years in the past. (Why that location? Well, it ain't called the Gatehouse for nothing, berk. The chant's long said that the structure has some mysterious link to the Lady's Mazes.)

Naturally, the Duke's disheveled and disoriented from his harrowing jaunt. He begins to roam the halls, looking for a way out. A few Bleakers notice him—his confused manner, his odd clothes. The wanderer starts to rant about how he's the factol of the Fated and must return to lead his troops in battle against his enemies. (The leatherhead doesn't realize yet that he's traveled back in time.)

Well, a body can guess what happens next. After all, the Bleakers have never heard of anyone named Rowan Darkwood, there's no war in the City of Doors at present, and the Fated already *have* a factol. So they lock the sod in a cell and begin a treatment program of herbs, deprivation, and cleansing madness. The "barmy" spends the next 500 years in his dark, dreary chamber, slowly growing more and more insane.

Why doesn't he die? Blame his own careful planning. See, before Darkwood ever set foot in Sigil he traveled the Outer Planes, and on Acheron he fell in with a band of Prolongers—bloods dedicated to extending their lives through magical and other means. Drawing upon their vast repository of knowledge, the Duke managed to give himself the natural life span of an arcane. Thus, the berk unknowingly bought himself five centuries of torment in a cold, dingy cell.

The Duke can't escape by using the *wish* again; its magic has been expended. To symbolize the shedding of his old life, the Bleakers took all his possessions and gave him a new and suitably meaningless name, as well: Gifad. So "Gifad" sits in his cell, wailing and babbling, biding his time until the ebony gem once again makes its way to Sigil.

When the time is right, he plans to break free, seize the powerful jewel, and at last unleash its long-dormant might. The fact that he doesn't have the slightest idea how to carry out his plan doesn't bother him a bit; he's lost most of his marbles, after all.

The sod's also got a good wait ahead of him—about 500 years. He meticulously keeps track of the passing weeks and years, the better to know exactly when the Labyrinth Stone's due to arrive in the Cage. And during his long wait, he issues many a prediction about events that will happen in the city, events he'd once researched as history. Much of his foresight is wrong, due in part to his mind-wrenching time jump and the Bleaker "cures," but he gets things right often enough to make his keepers wonder.

Gifad gains a reputation as a mysterious, ancient barmy—the oldest one in the Gatehouse, in fact—with a bit of divination skill, and the legend around him grows as the asylum sees new workers and the Bleak Cabal sees new factols. The "oldest barmy" is even mentioned in a few texts and histories of the Cage. (Ironically, the Duke's younger self saw a reference or two while poring through tomes for chant to use against the Lady.) Gifad also refers to himself as "the Chosen One," believing that he and he alone has tumbled to the dark of releasing the ancient wizard's spirit from the ebony gem.

As *Faction War* begins, Gifad realizes that "young" Rowan Darkwood is about to receive the Stone and subsequently be cast into the Mazes. The barmy's rants and raves take on a more haunting, desperate air, as he cries out to see the Duke. Gifad's crazy enough to believe that he and Darkwood are two separate people, and he's come to consider the factol of the Fated his enemy. Thus, the Bleakers keep a close eye on the barmy, for fear he might escape and try to do Rowan harm.

PRIDE OF THE MIGHTY

Folks might argue whether or not the Lady's punishment is appropriate to Darkwood's crime, but they can't dispute the fact that the berk brings it all on his own head. He underestimates his "opponent" with the arrogance of a typical prime. And his bloated pride causes him to do something even more leatherheaded: Keep a record of his scheme.

Not long before he's banished to the Mazes, the Duke pays a clandestine visit to the Civic Festhall. There, he buys time in a private sensorium and shares his gleeful satisfaction with an enchanted *recorder stone*, preserving his lovingly crafted plan. Then he locks the stone in a small box, protects it with a *glyph of warding*, and leaves it in the Festhall, stored along with thousands of similar boxes containing similar stones. (Removing a *recorder stone* from the Festhall drains it of its memories.)

Why does Darkwood take the risk? After all, the stone might be discovered, and his enemies thus warned. Well, first of all, his box is locked, warded, and safely stored away;

no one but him even knows it exists. And once his plans have come to fruition, he wants to be able to relive the delicious moments of anticipation in the years to come. Furthermore, when the smoke dies down from the faction war and he claims the throne of Sigil, he wants other folks to learn how he pulled it off. And finally, he'd like future generations of Cagers to know first-hand the turning point in their city's history (and grow humble with respect).

'Course, a body knows what's said about the best-laid plans. The Duke gets Mazed and ends up in the Gatehouse, but his *recorder stone* still sits in its box in the Civic Festhall, waiting for the right cutter to come along and unlock its secrets.

THE DARK OF THE GEM

So why does the Labyrinth Stone stay in Sigil when Darkwood gets sent to the Mazes? Simple: the will of the Lady. She got rid of the berk because he started messing with the ebony gem, so she's sure not going to let him keep it. When the Duke vanishes, the jewel appears in a gutter in the Market Ward, where a bubber finds it and trades it for a cup of ale. The gem continues to pass through many hands in the Cage, until it comes to the attention of the tiefling Alluvius Ruskin, who's searched for the precious item for years. She's got her own plan to grab the reins of Sigil, and she, too, wants the trapped wizard's help. Ruskin pulls all the strings she can to obtain the Stone, and she even finds some notes scrawled by the old spellslinger himself. Still, she can't figure out how to exploit the jewel, and that frustrates her to no end.

Here's the dark of it: Before the legendary wizard was entombed in the gem, he prepared a gargantuan spell woven directly into the essence of Sigil. In other words, he literally turned the city *into* a sigil, one that he hoped to use to strike the Lady down. After all, she supposedly derives her power from the city; what better way to smite her than to turn the burg itself against her? With the spell, the wizard could've reshaped the Cage according to his dark whims, in effect remaking reality.

It was no ordinary enchantment, to be sure, and neither was the scroll that contained it. See, the scroll was little more than meticulous directions for following a particular path through a certain area of Sigil, tracing over the lines of the buried magic. This ritual prepared the spell, but to activate it, the wizard planned to surrender his own life essence, to merge with the magic. Then he need only envision the reality he wished to bring about, and it would come to pass. There was just one catch—his wish had to be phrased as a single word.

'Course, on the very day he walked the hidden path and prepared to trigger the spell, the Lady stopped him and imprisoned him in the gem. But the enchantment never faded. It's still there to this day, under what's now the Clerk's Ward, waiting for the wizard to return and activate its power. Over the millennia, a handful of high-ups have heard whispers of the dormant spell—including Alluvius Ruskin

and the arcanaloth known as Shemeshka the Marauder—but no one's ever tumbled to its secret. Only the wizard's spirit can empower the magic, which means that any blood who wants to use the spell must have both the scroll and the ebony gem.

Rowan Darkwood never found out the dark of the spell; he knew only that the Stone somehow controlled incredible might. That's why his older self, Gifad, is so desperate to flee the Gatehouse. If he can just get his hands on the gem again, he's sure he can release the old spellslinger's spirit and harness the mysterious power for himself.

◆ THE Factions ◆

The 15 factions of Sigil, obviously, play a huge part in the adventure. Unfortunately, this book doesn't have the space to describe each group and its history from head to toe. For that kind of detailed chant, a blood should turn to the *Factol's Manifesto*, the *Planewalker's Handbook*, or (at the very least) the player's book in the *Campaign Setting* boxed set. But this section offers a look at the current activities and alliances of each faction, as well as their reactions to the war—and their leaders' disappearances.

As the factions choose up sides, though, the DM should keep in mind that few groups have a real *reason* to fight. The entire war takes up about six weeks of game time, so there's no time for factions to debate and posture and dream up logical justifications as to why they should or shouldn't jump in. They act on the spur of the moment (which is unusual for some), caught up in the wave of "war fever" that's washing through the city. They focus entirely on political gains and losses, temporarily losing sight of what's really important: belief.

Another point to keep in mind: The war has no "good guys" or "bad guys." Those who join the Doomguard's battle call their opponents "the oppressors of Sigil" and seek to liberate the city from what they consider harsh domination. Those who throw in with the Harmonium call their foes "the enemies of peace" and want to put an end to dangerous aggression. Both sides have ultimately well-meaning goals, even if the paths they take to reach those goals are questionable.

One thing's certain: Tensions among the factions will flare like wildfire. And it's a good bet that any adventuring party will contain player characters of several different philosophical persuasions. But that doesn't mean that, say, a Harmonium PC and a Doomguard PC should feel obligated to beat each other bloody. Fact is, the DM should encourage them to get along, perhaps by letting them meet NPCs in Sigil who also belong to opposing factions but aren't so fanatical in their beliefs. It can be entertaining to roleplay some intra-party dissension, but taking hostilities too far'll ruin the fun of the game for the players and the DM alike.

The gatefold of this book presents a summary of the fate of each factol and a breakdown of the warring sides.

THE ATHAR

The Defiers believe that the gods aren't deities, just immensely mighty (and oppressive) beings who don't deserve worship. In response to recent interest in powers both living and dead, Factol Terrance has stepped up his faction's campaign to "set folks straight." It involves in-your-face prose-lytizing, public testimonials by sods who feel betrayed by their gods, and even clandestine plans to make an example of a temple by exposing its jink-grubbing hypocrisy.

The Athar's call for self-sufficiency echoes tenets held by the Believers of the Source, the Fated, the Free League, and the Transcendent Order, and Terrance'd love to use that link to foster better relations with those groups. The Sign of One also holds a similar philosophy, but their attempts to resurrect gods by the power of imagining don't sit well with the Athar; fact is, the two factions nearly went to war all on their own (see *Dead Gods* [2631] for details).

FACTOL'S FATE: The Lady throws Terrance into the Mazes. When he disappears, the Defiers scream bloody murder all over the Cage. Many accuse the Signers, though a good number blame some vengeful priest or proxy who'd tired of the Athar's "blasphemy." When war breaks out, they prefer to remain neutral—they don't much like the Doomguard's aggression, but they sure aren't going to fight alongside the Sign of One.

THE BELIEVERS OF THE SOURCE

As their nickname implies, the Godsmen feel that cutters who meet the challenges of the multiverse can ultimately ascend to a godlike state. But a strong movement within the faction's tired of stumbling through an endless cycle of tests and hoping to learn from experience; they want to stake out the most efficient path to ascension. Factol Ambar doesn't really think that life's tests can be defined or quantified, but he's willing to let folks have a go at it.

This philosophical shift has led members of the faction to become friendlier with the Guvners (who sometimes ascend through knowledge), the Sensates (who could identify uplifting experiences), and the Ciphers (who ascend seemingly by chance). But they're still close with the Athar as well, and they still oppose the pessimistic views of the Bleak Cabal and the Dustmen.

FACTOL'S FATE: The Lady tosses Ambar into the Mazes. When he vanishes, the Godsmen come to the conclusion that he's simply ascended, given that there's no evidence of foul play. When the war starts, the Believers stay out of it for as long as they can, but their deep-seated opposition to the Doomguard's philosophy reluctantly forces them to take a stand.

THE BLEAK CABAL

Factol Lhar finally gave himself over to his growing madness. He succumbed to the Grim Retreat and committed himself to the Mad Bleaker wing of the Gatehouse, appointing Sruce (the wing's former head) as the new factol. She hasn't changed the core of Bleaker philosophy—they still believe that the multiverse has no meaning, so a berk should look for it within himself—but she discourages wallowing in melancholia. Sruce would like her charges to *act* to create personal meaning, and she's kicked off a more aggressive campaign to feed the poor and clean up the Hive, among other tasks.

This has strained the Bleakers' usual warm relations with the entropy-loving Doomguard just a bit, but other allies like the Dustmen and the Revolutionary League don't really care. What's more, Sruce has slanted her group's new activities so that those who object to the Bleakers' humanitarian efforts—namely, the lawful Guvners, Harmonium, and Mercykillers—look heartless.

FACTOL'S FATE: The Lady exiles Sruce to the Mazes. When the Bleakers notice that she's missing, they don't much care. Perhaps she went barmy, like Lhar. Perhaps she quit and left town.

What's it matter, anyway? When the fighting starts, the Bleakers remain true to their credo and reject the Doomguard's offer of an alliance. A war's just as meaningless as anything else in the multiverse. Most factioneers don't get involved.

THE DOOMGUARD

Factol Pentar's never been one to shun violence, but lately she's directed the Sinkers to force entropy upon Sigil (and the cosmos) with a good deal more fury. It's due partly to the recent Modron March, which took place well before its time (for details, see *The Great Modron March* [2628])—Pentar sees it as proof positive that the multiverse is falling apart faster and faster each day.

'Course, residents of the Cage don't much like the Doomguard's new...intensity. There've already been a few loud clashes with the Harmonium and the Fraternity of Order, and most folks just can't see a peaceful end to the road that Pentar's chosen. The Revolutionary League, on the other hand, loves the increased anarchy and tries to "help" the Sinkers fulfill their goal.

FACTOL'S FATE: Pentar's one of the first to be Mazed, and when she disappears, the rest of the Sinkers publicly

I DIDN'T KNOW
WE HAD ONE.
—A BLEAKER,
UPON LEARNING
THAT HIS FACTOL'S
GONE MISSING



point the finger at the Harmonium and the Sensates. That's largely due to Rowan Darkwood getting the Doomguard all fired up about those two factions. And it's just the push they need to declare war.

THE DUSTMEN

The Dead don't really make plots, not like other factions do. Plots are actions of life, and the Dustmen care only for excising their passions and achieving the cold purity of True Death. Still, bashers in Sigil always seem to suspect Factol Skull of something or other, if only because the blood's so mysteriously creepy.

The Dustmen oppose the Godsmen, the Sensates, and the Signers for foolishly clinging to the idea of life and purpose. They tend to find more in common with similarly dark factions like the Doomguard and the Bleak Cabal.

FACTOL'S FATE: The Lady consigns Skull to the Mazes, and the Dustmen assume that he finally achieved True Death. When the war starts, the Dead stay home. They're just not motivated enough to take up arms, content to clean up after the others and remove the victims from the streets. Besides, with Skull gone, the faction lacks the little direction it used to have.

THE FATED

For the full dark of Rowan Darkwood's current schemes, read the "Background" section of this chapter. Note, though, that the rest of the Fated ain't aware of their leader's actions. Sure, they know he's an ambitious cutter who'll one day make his move, but they've no idea that he's kidnapped Alisohn Nilesia, maneuvered Sigil into war, or been banished by the Lady. Only the Duke's most trusted lieutenants even know of his quest for the gem containing the Lady's ancient foe.

The Fated's allies and enemies don't really change. Because they believe that the strong (in other words, the most capable) should take whatever they can, the faction runs afoul of the law-boys—especially the Harmonium and the Guvners—and is quite cordial with the Free League. Darkwood's public romance with Nilesia, of course, has caused many Mercykillers to break ranks with their lawful brethren and give the Fated more slack.

FACTOL'S FATE: Darkwood gets thrown into the Mazes soon after the war officially begins, and the rest of the Fated think that he's simply gone into hiding for the duration of the violence—taking care of number one, as usual. With their leader missing, the faction's rank-and-file do as they please. Some fight on one side or the other; some stay neutral.

THE FRATERNITY OF ORDER

This bunch of bean-counters, also known as the Guvners, feels that to control a thing, a body's just got to learn its rules and laws. That includes the multiverse. But it's come to

light that the Guvners themselves may have broken (or at least bent) what folks consider a fundamental tenet. Anonymous sources have leaked word around town that Factol Hashkar is a petitioner—which he *is*—and when asked, Hashkar neither admits nor denies it, saying only "There's no law against it."

True, but the very idea of a deader as the high-up of the lawmakers of Sigil doesn't sit well with the Harmonium or the Mercykillers, Hashkar's usual allies. To make matters worse, chant is the berk ended up in the Cage when he died because he worshiped the Lady of Pain! Public opinion's growing against Hashkar, and the Fraternity's traditional foes—the Xaositects, the Anarchists, and the Doomguard—revel in every moment of it.

FACTOL'S FATE: Hashkar's one of the few factols removed from the board by "natural causes"—in this case, murder. The poor sod's killed by one of the violent criminals secretly released from the Prison, a cold-blooded berk who'd sworn vengeance against him. The Guvners blame the Xaositects, and when that group joins the battle on the side of the Doomguard, the Guvners join the other side.

THE FREE LEAGUE

The Indeps're so freethinking that they don't even like being called a faction, just a loose assortment of cutters who take a stand against oppression and help each other out once in a while. Ironically, they've been forced into becoming more unified because of the large number of "exuberant" Hardheads bent on eradicating them from the Cage (unofficially, of course). The Indeps have retreated to the sprawling Bazaar and turned it into something of a Free League province by rearranging stalls to block streets, having merchants point Hardheads in the wrong direction or getting street kids to distract 'em with pranks, and tossing out any berk who hassles an Indep.

The League's still guided by Bria Tomay and the wemics Lethea and Lysander, but the group's plight has forced them to consider a strong alliance with the Fated, who also hold self-sufficiency dear (and have no love for the Harmonium).

LEADERS' FATE: The Lady sends Bria and the wemics to the Mazes. 'Course, the Indeps blame the Hardheads when the trio vanishes. Fact is, they make a big noise and decide that they must, at last, strike decisively at the Harmonium or risk extinction. The bulk of the Free League joins the Doomguard in their war, though they don't give a fig who wins in the end. They just want to bring down the Hardheads once and for all, and they're willing to forge unlikely alliances to do it.

THE HARMONIUM

Though it seems they have plenty of enemies—including the Indeps, the Anarchists, the Xaositects, the Doomguard, the Fated, and sometimes even the Sensates, Signers, and Ciphers—the Hardheads don't consider themselves bad cutters. On the

contrary, they want to bring peace and harmony to the multiverse, though mainly by making folks do things their way.

Factol Sarin's aware of his faction's "perception problem" and has taken steps to fix things. Most importantly, he's learned about the rash of illegal beatings (and even killings) of Indepts and wants to clean up his ranks, so that Hardheads arrest only berks that truly deserve it. Sarin's a paladin, after all, and thinks the Harmonium should set a good example for everyone.

FACTOL'S FATE: Unfortunately, Sarin's killed by a Revolutionary League assassin just before the war officially begins. There's no mystery to it, either; the Anarchists eagerly claim credit for the deed. The rest of the Hardheads demand that the villains—and their allies, the Doomguard—pay for the heinous crime.

THE MERCYKILLERS

Factol Alisoehn Nilesia piked off a lot of high-ups in Sigil when she reduced the faction's sentences for punishing criminals to just three options: 10 years in the Prison, 10 years' hard labor on the Lower Planes, or death. She didn't care, partially because she had many loyal Mercykillers behind her, and partially because she was insane.

Nilesia's second-in-command, the paladin Arwyl Swan's Son, seeks to temper the Red Death's deteriorating image by focusing the faction on carrying out fair justice, not overpunishing the guilty. He heads up a movement within the Mercykillers that quietly opposes Nilesia's harsh rulings. Normally, the faction

stands against the doings of the Signers, the Sensates, and the Anarchists, but with the group being of two minds lately, the Mercykillers seem to have lost their direction.

FACTOL'S FATE: After their secret marriage, Darkwood sells Nilesia as a slave to the fiends of the Lower Planes. The rest of the Mercykillers figure that she's fallen prey to the same fate (whatever it is) as the rest of the factols who've gone missing. Arwyl is saddened by the disappearance but sees it as his chance to return the Mercykillers to their roots. However, the faction ends up splitting three ways (see Act I for details), with bashers fighting on both sides of the war.

THE REVOLUT+IONARY LEAGUE

The Anarchists haven't lost their way—if anything, they've been energized by the Doomguard's recent upswing in entropy. These berks think that the only path to the truth is through the rubble of the status quo, and that the factions should be the first institutions to fall. They're glad to let the Sinkers spread destruction throughout the Cage, not to mention bear the brunt of reprisals. Once disorder's at its peak, the League plans to ignite true anarchy.

This decentralized faction operates in cells and is tough to unite. Still, it's no dark that nearly every Anarchist despises the lawful Harmonium, Guvners, and Mercykillers. Fact is, many Cagers believe that it was a member



of the Revolutionary League who leaked the chant about Factol Hashkar's deepest secret.

LEADERS' FATE: When the Lady sends a handful of cell leaders to the Mazes, the Anarchists don't really care. They just assume that the berks got sent to the dead-book while engaging in plots to overthrow order. But they jump at the chance to publicly blame the Harmonium for the disappearances, though they also finger the Guvners and the Mercy-killers for good measure.

THE SIGN ⊕ F ⊕ NE

The Signers've stirred up a lot of talk lately about bringing a dead power back to life, and the fact that they've bandied about Aoskar's name just makes things worse. 'Course, talking about resurrecting a god and actually *doing* it are two different things, but the faction's enemies don't want to take the chance. The Athar especially oppose the idea, and the Harmonium and Mercykillers come down hard on sods who merely speak of Aoskar, much less try to restore him to life.

It's important to remember, too, that Factol Darius doesn't necessarily endorse the plan. The Signers believe that the cosmos exists only because the mind imagines it, and that each cutter's the center of his own multiverse. So she doesn't rule her faction with a heavy hand. Unfortunately, the Bleak Cabal hates all Signers, largely because the latter group took the credit for imagining a Bleaker factol to death long ago. The Believers of the Source, however, have begun to recognize a lot of common philosophical ground with the Sign of One.

FACTOL'S FATE: When Darius vanishes, the Signers choose to believe that she's merely imagined herself into a new level of existence. They try to stay clear of the brewing war, but when their allies the Sensates find themselves bloodied on all fronts, the Signers come to their aid.

THE ⊙ CIE+Y ⊕ F ⊙ SENSATION

Factol Erin Montgomery's been a thorn in Rowan Darkwood's side ever since the idea of owning the Cage first became a gleam of desire in the Duke's eye. Thus, the Sensates and the Fated have never been exactly close. The Hardheads don't like the Sensates' rampant individualism. And the Dustmen, the Bleakers, and especially the Doomguard oppose the Sensates' basic belief that truth lies in the physical senses, that the multiverse must be experienced to be understood.

'Course, the public loves the Sensates, who provide and sponsor all sorts of entertainment in the Cage. Lately, Factol Montgomery's ordered a dramatic increase in the availability and intensity of that entertainment, hoping to win converts who find themselves too delighted by it all to turn back.

FACTOL'S FATE: Along with Pentar, Montgomery's the first to be consigned to the Mazes. When she vanishes, the rest of the Sensates keep her absence quiet, though they blame Darkwood and vow revenge on the Fated. They're not

too keen on waging a war against both the Doomguard and the Revolutionary League—or of standing with the Harmonium—but when the fighting begins, they have little choice.

THE TRANSCENDENT+ ORDER

The Ciphers, led by Factol Rhys, get along well with nearly every other faction. See, they train themselves to meld mind and body so their spirits will act in rhythm with the multiverse, and they share this sense of balance with the rest of the Cage by mediating disputes between other factions. Truth is, their only real foe is the Harmonium, who're suspicious of any brand of peace that they don't impose themselves. The Ciphers never cared much for the Bleak Cabal, either, but they feel that Factol Sruce's new emphasis on acting rather than moping is a step in the right direction.

FACTOL'S FATE: Rhys manages to avoid disappearing like the rest of the factols. She's in touch with the cadence of the planes, and she senses that something bad's about to happen in Sigil. To protect herself and her faction, she leaves the Cage before all the trouble begins and takes refuge in a Cipher base on Elysium. Only a few of her top bloods know this; the rest of the Ciphers simply think that their leader's gone the way of the others. However, Rhys gave her factors clear orders to keep the faction out of "whatever's going to happen." All the Ciphers do during the war is provide mediation and diplomacy.

THE XA⊙SITECT+S

Traditionally, the Xaositects spread the beauty of chaos singly or in small groups, since they can't keep big plans going for any length of time. Lately, though, they've participated in more odd occurrences and large-scale actions, which worries the Harmonium and the Guvners to no end. One day, hundreds of Xaositects surrounded the Hall of Speakers and sang loudly (all warbling different tunes, of course) for the whole afternoon. Another time, they replaced the clerks at the Hall of Information and sent visitors to the wrong locations all day long.

No one knows how much of this is Factol Karan's doing and how much just the nature of chance. The Doomguard believes that the Xaositects' weird actions could blossom into full-fledged entropy, if given the right push. And the Bleakers feel that the barmy berks prove the meaninglessness of existence better than almost anything else does.

FACTOL'S FATE: The Lady throws Karan into the Mazes. The blood vanishes while in the custody of the Harmonium (see Act I: Guarding Rr'ka for details), so naturally the Xaositects blame the Hardheads, and quite loudly so. That's not enough to drag them into the war, though. It's not until the Guvners blame them for Hashkar's death that they join in the fighting—on the side of the Doomguard. Given the Xaositect mindset, though, who knows how long it'll be before they change their tune?

ACT I: GUARDING RR'KA

'Course I'm takin' you to see Factol Pentar, berk—it's just that, y' know, she's in hidin', so we've got to creep along the back way.

Wouldn't do to blow her cover, now would it? By the by, I might need a bit more jink to get a few bashers to look the other way, if y' know what I mean—ah, that's a good lad. So, just two days in from Toril, did

y'say? That's that sandy world, right? No offense, berk, but I hear it's a real nasty place.

Wouldn't catch me on the Prime, no sir. So, have y'heard all that screed 'bout Pentar 'n' some other factols goin' missing? Well, let me tell you, berk, t'ain't true, not a word of

it! They're all holed up together, see, hashin' out somethin' big. I figger it's safe t' let you in on the dark of it, seein' as yer a trustworthy sort and all. You won't tell no one, will you? Good lad.

Here, through this door—quick, now, don't dawdle or y' might be spotted!

Sure is a tight squeeze, eh?

Here, let me hold that big axe for you. Don't worry, we don't need light in here—Pentar likes

it dark, see? She's a vampire, if y' want to

know the truth of it. A real nice one, though. She won't hurt you.

Right, then, y' ready? There's a door up ahead, at the end of the room. Find the knob? Go ahead, open it—Pentar's waiting on the other side. Don't you worry none, berk. I'm right behind you.

—Jongo the Touched, peeling a gully in the Lower Ward

◆ THE STORY SO FAR ◆

By the time this chapter opens, the leaders of 11 different factions have gone missing. Rhys left Sigil on her own; Nilesia's been sold to fiends; and Erin Montgomery, Pentar, Skall, Bria Tomay and the twin wemics, various Anarchist cell leaders, Darius, Sruce, Terrance, and Vergrove have all been sent to the Mazes by the Lady of Pain. Only four factols remain in the Cage: Darkwood, Sarin, Hashkar, and Karan. 'Course, the disappearances aren't all common knowledge. Most of the factions keep the news to themselves, sometimes not even telling their own rank-and-file—the last thing they'd want to do is whip up anxiety and fear by making an official announcement. However, the Athar, the Doomguard, the Revolutionary League, and the Free League make a big noise about losing their leaders and openly blame various parties. Thus, most Cagers know that Terrance, Pentar, Anarchist cell captains, and Bria and the wemics are missing.

Naturally, the disappearances fit in just fine with Darkwood's scheme to stir up tensions among the factions. Thanks to his clandestine prodding, the Doomguard and the Revolutionary League're eager to wage war against the Harmonium and the Sensates, who're just as ready to fight back. No real violence has erupted yet, apart from a few brawls here and there, and the Ciphers work to get the groups to settle things peacefully. Still, most folks in Sigil hold their breaths and wait for the inevitable.

The DM must also remember that Darkwood and Nilesia secretly exchanged wedding vows not long before he turned stag on her. It was all a peel, of course; the Duke only wanted to win the favor of her troops. And it worked—she ordered her most loyal Mercykillers to follow Rowan's word as if it were her own. Right after that, she "disappeared."

PERHAPS I SHOULD
GET +Θ WORK
ΘN A NEW EDITION.
—+HE EDITΘR
OF +HE
FACTΘL'S MANIFESTΘ

GETTING THE PCs INVOLVED

A lot happens in *Faction War* before the PCs take part in the story. The DM can start the adventure (with Day 1 of the Timeline) in the background, while the heroes're away from the Cage, perhaps traveling the planes on another mission. That'll underscore the fact that Sigil's a dynamic burg where things occur all the time, not just when the PCs're watching. And it'll immerse them in the action as soon as they return, since it won't be long before they hear Defier, Sinkers, and Indep malcontents grousing in the streets about the "kidnapping" or "foul play" that seems to have befallen their leaders. The PCs shouldn't hear everything at once from a big-mouthed courier. The chant should leak out slowly, naturally, so they don't realize right away that anything's amiss.

Once the cutters start to hear the news, they might visit their faction headquarters looking for more information. PCs belonging to the Athar, the Doomguard, the Free League, or the Revolutionary League get the party line. The Athar blame "god-addled" priests and Signers, the Doomguard finger the Harmonium and the Sensates, the Indeps likewise accuse the Hardheads, and the Anarchists blame the entire triad of law. If PCs from other factions check on the safety of their own factols, they're politely dismissed by high-ups who smile and say, "Everything's fine." Only the Bleakers admit—to anyone who asks—that their factol has vanished, a meaningless event that inspires little more than shrugs. 'Course, cutters who belong to the Fated, the Fraternity of Order, the Harmonium, or the Xaositects find nothing wrong at home whatsoever; their factols're alive and well.

DREAM A LITTLE DREAM

In Act IV: Darkstorm, the PCs may explore a secret yugoloth lair hidden beneath the streets of Sigil and discover the Nightmare Shaft, which allows its user to invade the brain-boxes of sods in the Cage. However, they have their first brush with the Shaft in *this* chapter, when A'kin—an arcanaloth who runs the Friendly Fiend trinket shop in the Lower Ward—uses it to plant a clue in one of the heroes' heads. Why does he do it? Well, Cagers have asked that question about A'kin ever since he first set up shop in the city. His jovial persona's unnerving, but no one's tumbled to whether he's playing a dark game or whether he really *is* as nice as he comes across.

In this case, A'kin aids the PCs solely to vex Shemeshka the Marauder, a powerful arcanaloth who controls much commerce in Sigil and wants to get her claws on even more. See, Shemeshka's heard rumors about the massive spell said



to be laced within the fabric of the city, and she's put her best agents on the trail of the dark. A'kin knows about the hidden spell, too, and he wants to prevent Shemeshka from gaining control of it—the devious fiend gets a kick out of frustrating her plans.

At some point during Act I, the PC with the lowest Intelligence receives A'kin's clue while sleeping, in the form of a dream. An unidentifiable voice says: *"Who better knows the factions than he who wrote their book? Seek him everywhere and Nowhere."*

A'kin's hinting that the anonymous editor of the famously banned book, the *Factol's Manifesto*, will prove valuable in the coming crisis, and that to find him the heroes must go to a hidden refuge called Nowhere, known to very few bloods in Sigil. The PCs will learn of Nowhere in Act V: *Magic Uncaged*, but until then, they won't realize that the dream referred to a specific place, and they won't be able to track down the editor by any means. For now it's just a tantalizing puzzle, though the DM's free to sprinkle assorted red herrings throughout the adventure.

◆ BAR BRAWL ◆

This encounter's designed to thrust the PCs into the adventure and let them observe first-hand the tensions escalating among the factions. It can take place anywhere in Sigil, though a crowded tavern, inn, or other gathering hall works best. While the heroes relax, eat, drink, toss the chant, or do whatever it is they like to do in the Cage, they can't help but notice a band of six Harmonium bruisers—mainly because the Hardheads're half drunk on cheap bub, laughing loudly, and hurling unclever insults at various patrons of the establishment. Most folks try to ignore them, but it's clear that everyone's bothered; some seem fearful, while others glare with hatred.

Despite the noise of the establishment, the PCs can pick up pieces of chant all around them. Most of it disparages the bubbers—the leader of whom is identified as Anton Levels skull—then flows into the hot topic of the day: rumors of a war brewing between the Harmonium and the Doomguard. The PCs can overhear the following (some of which is false):

- ◆ The Hardheads're out to stop the Sinkers from laying waste to Sigil with a huge hoard of illegally stockpiled weapons.

- ◆ No, it's the Sinkers who're trying to defend the Armory against Hardhead aggression.
- ◆ That fiend in charge of the Armory's handing out weapons to any berk who wants one.
- ◆ The Harmonium scragged Factol Pentar and bribed the Mercykillers to lock her in the deepest cell in the Prison. They also sent those three Indep leaders to the dead-book.
- ◆ The Red Death's suffering through some kind of internal conflict.
- ◆ The Signers managed to imagine Factol Terrance of the Athar right out of existence.
- ◆ A bunch of apocalyptic bashers called the Eschaton are predicting the end of Sigil.
- ◆ All that chant's just so much screed! All the factols're right where they should be.
- ◆ Pentar (or Terrance, or Bria Tomay) was seen in the Lower Ward just a few hours ago.

The DM should give the PCs a short while to overhear various bits of chant and grow uncomfortable with the Hardheads' boorish behavior. Before the heroes get so worked up that they intervene, though, the bullies turn on a

new target: a puny, middle-aged human named Spragg. The sod works with the cambion Ely Cromlich in the Armory, and his tormenters know full well that he's a Sinker—one too weak to fight back. Levels skull yells at him to clear the Doomguard out of the Armory now and save the Harmonium the trouble of throwing 'em out. The other Hardheads surround Spragg and keep him from leaving, while Levels skull warns: "Sure be a shame 'f what happened to Pentar happens t' you, y'know?"

Spragg's a few tables away from the PCs. Before they can react, a long-haired bariaur named Lagrippe and a briny-smelling tiefling named Auster—both Free Leaguers—rise from their chairs nearby. They stride toward the Harmonium, warning them to "leave the little sod alone." At another table

close by, four Clueless half-elves—as drunk as the bullies, if not more so—drain their mugs and, looking for trouble, move toward the confrontation. Half a dozen other customers hoot and holler and shout out faction dogma, but most folks in the area gather their things and disappear.

If the PCs do nothing, the Indeps and the half-elves surround the Hardheads. The Indeps accuse them of murdering their leaders, Bria Tomay and the wemics Lethea and Lysander, and add: "We're not going to let your kind stomp



HEY. BERK,
YOU LOOK LIKE
SOMEONE JUST—UH,
YOU LOOK LIKE—
YOU'RE UGLY!
—A SAMPLE OF
ANTON LEVELSKULL'S
"WIT"



us any more." The rescuers quickly forget all about Spragg, who's still stuck in the middle of the group. Accusations of factol-napping and war-mongering fly, and things really start to get ugly. A brawl breaks out that puts Lagrippe, one Hardhead, one half-elf, and two innocent bystanders in the dead-book, and severely wounds Spragg, who tries to dash for safety. A larger squad of Harmonium bashers arrives to scrag the combatants, but witnesses to the fight jeer and throw food at them, angry because they doubt the faction'll punish its own.

Course, the PCs can try to defuse the situation before it goes that far by using diplomacy, trickery, magic, or just buying everyone a few rounds of drinks. They can also escort Spragg away and leave the rest—who won't even notice his absence—to their feud. (If the heroes seem slow to act, the DM can have Levels skull insult them as well, especially any Sinkers or Indeps in the party.) On the other hand, if the PCs start or join a fight, their participation encourages other berks to jump in, resulting in a violent free-for-all with several dozen brawlers all smashing each other.

ANTON LEVELSKULL (PL/♂ HUMAN/F7/HARMONIUM/LE): AC 3 (plate mail); MV 12; hp 64; THACO 12 (faction training, Str bonus); #AT 3/2; Dmg 2d4+3 (*morning star* +1, Str bonus); SD *charm person* (1/day), +3 to saves vs. emotion-affecting magic; SZ M (6'6" tall); ML fanatic (17); XP 975.

S 18, D 12, C 16, I 8, W 11, Ch 9.

Special Equipment: plate mail, *morning star* +1.

HARDHEAD BASHERS (PL/VAR HUMAN/F4/HARMONIUM/LN OR LE) (5): AC 5 (chain mail); MV 12; hp 22 each; THACO 16 (faction training); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SD *charm person* (1/day); SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (15); XP 175.

Special Equipment: chain mail, short sword.

SPRAGG (PR/♂ HUMAN/F1/DOOMGUARD/LG): AC 8 (padded armor); MV 12; hp 6; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dirk); SA entropic blow (1/week); SZ M (5' tall); ML steady (11); XP 65.

SA—while engaged in melee with a chaotic or evil foe, Spragg can try to use his faction's entropic blow; if his attack roll is 5 or more points higher than the number needed to hit, the foe automatically loses half his current hit points.

Special Equipment: dirk, 12 sp.

LAGRIPPE (PL/♀ BARIAUR/M5/FREE LEAGUE/N): AC 6 (*bracers*); MV 15; hp 14; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 (knife); SA poison; SD infravision 60', +2 to surprise, saving throw bonuses; SZ L (7' tall); ML average (8); XP 650.

SA—anyone scratched by Lagrippe's knife (Type L poison; onset 2d4 rounds) must save vs. poison or suffer 10 points of damage.

SD—+3 to save vs. spell; can save (with no bonus) vs. any mind-affecting attack that normally allows no save.

S 10, D 12, C 11, I 16, W 14, Ch 9.

Spells (4/2/1): 1st—*avoid planar effects*, *color spray*, *magic missile*, *taunt*; 2nd—*blindness*, *irritation*; 3rd—*hold person*.

Special Equipment: *bracers of defense* (AC 6), poisoned knife.

AUSTER (PL/♀ TIEFLING/T4/FREE LEAGUE/NE): AC 4 (*cloak*, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 18; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (*scourge*) or 1d6 (short sword); SA backstab×2, rend armor, electricity; SD infravision 60', *invisibility* (2/week), *misdirection* (1/day), *suggestion* (1/week), saving throw bonuses; SZ M (5'5" tall); ML steady (12); XP 420.

SA—the *scourge* shreds clothes in 2 rounds, leather armor in 3 rounds. Auster can will the *scourge* to flare (5/day), causing 2d8 points of electrical damage (save vs. spell for half) in addition to normal barb damage.

SD—+2 to save vs. spell and paralysis; can save (with no bonus) vs. any mind-affecting attack that normally allows no save.

S 12, D 17, C 10, I 9, W 14, Ch 4

Special Equipment: short sword, *cloak of protection* +3, *scourge of lightning*.

Thief Skills: PP 90, OL 20, F/RT 10, MS 90, HS 90, DN 15, CW 70, RL 5.

DRUNK CLUELESS (PR/♂ HALF-ELF/R5/CG) (4): AC 6 (studded leather, Dex bonus) or 5 (hide, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 34 each; THACO 16; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 1d6 (hand axe) and/or 1d4 (dagger); SD infravision 60', 30% resistance to *sleep* and *charm*; SZ M (6' tall); ML unsteady (7); XP 270.

Notes: Two of the rangers wear studded leather and fight two-handed (with hand axes and daggers) with no penalty. The other two wear hide armor and fight only with hand axes.

Special Equipment: hand axe, dagger.

Ranger Skills: HS 31, MS 40.

TALKING +⊕ SPRAGG

If the PCs pry Spragg loose from the confrontation, he's extremely grateful (though less so if he sustains injuries due to their action or inaction). He offers to buy them a drink or a meal, but he's eager to return to the safety of the Armory, fearing more encounters with Harmonium thugs. With little prompting from the PCs, Spragg complains bitterly about abusive Hardheads in general, tarring the whole faction with a wide brush and offering as absolute fact the "news" that they're gearing up for an unprovoked attack on the Armory. Spragg doesn't bring it up, but if the PCs ask about Pentar, he admits that she's missing and angrily pins the blame on the Harmonium (as part of their scheme to weaken the Doomguard before the raid on the Armory). The cutters can't change Spragg's mind on the subject; despite his self-righteous attitude, he seems as stubborn and bigoted as the Hardheads who harassed him.

◆ US Y⊕U HELP WILL? ◆

Unbeknownst to the PCs, they were observed during the bar brawl. A plump aasimar named Yaxis (Pl/♀ aasimar/B3/Xaositects/CG), enjoying dinner at the establishment with friends, saw the heroes handle the situation. The next day, she asks around about the group and eventually talks to someone who points her to her quarry. In this encounter, Yaxis seeks to interest the PCs in visiting a Xaositect safe house to listen to a job offer. She hopes to play on the cutters' vanity, buttering them up so they feel obligated to lend their "superior talents."

Unfortunately, being a new Xaositect, Yaxis thinks it's necessary to use her faction scramblespeak every chance she gets, despite—or perhaps because of—the fact that it confuses everyone else. So when she talks to the PCs, she mixes up the order of her words in every sentence. It'll probably take the cutters a while to puzzle out what she's trying to say, though a Xaositect PC can tumble to the meaning if he makes a successful Intelligence check. The gist of her message is this:

"I saw you assist that poor man yesterday in the bar. Clever, tough cutters like you are what we need. If you'd be so kind, my faction would like to offer you temporary employment. It won't take much of your valuable time, but it'd mean ever so much to us. This"—she hands the PCs a piece of crumpled paper wrapped around some coins—"will tell you where to go. You're the only bloods who can help us now. Thank you, good sirs."

After handing over the paper, Yaxis offers fawning good-byes and then leaves. She acts too shy to stay, but truth is, she's got to find and hire other cutters (despite what she told the PCs), and she doesn't have time to wigwag with the heroes.

The DM should have fun with this encounter. If the heroes don't understand her, Yaxis speaks more loudly and slowly, as if that'll help—but mixes up her words just the same. If she gets frustrated, she scrawls her message down, but still writes the words in the wrong order (and the fact that she can't spell to save a deva's life complicates matters even more).

SLIPPING THE BLINDS: What if the PCs didn't do a thing to help Spragg escape a beating? That's unlikely—the cutters're supposed to be heroes—but the DM can give them other opportunities in Sigil to perform a public, selfless act that requires either brains or brawn and have Yaxis on hand to note their skill.

THE N⊕+E

The aasimar's note is wrapped around a small stack of three gold coins and a crimson token stamped with the likeness of a red slaad. It's hard to make out the words on the wrinkled parchment, but they're a set of hand-scrawled directions to

a Xaositect safe house in the Hive Ward. 'Course, the directions're written in scramblespeak:

Corner at Whisper start Way and Gouge of the Row. Iron the follow poles. To fork the take the left Ditch. To meat the follow of smell Orsmonder's. Thatched with the green turn, kip at the door and the roof. Three travel blocks. Broken the kip at windows with the knock most.

If a Xaositect PC tries to decipher the note, he finds it more difficult than translating speech, as the written words don't impart inflection, facial expressions, gestures, and the like. He must make an Intelligence check at –2 for each sentence he tries to understand, and he can try only once per sentence.

Sooner or later, the cutters will tumble to the meaning of the note. The directions say:

Start at the corner of Whisper Way and Gouge Row. Follow the iron poles. Take the left fork to the Ditch. Follow the smell of meat to Orsmonder's. Turn at the kip with the thatched roof and the green door. Travel three blocks. Knock at the kip with the most broken windows,

The only place Whisper Way and Gouge Row cross is in the Hive Ward, so that's where the PCs must start (Sigil has no streets called Whisper Row or Gouge Way). A map of the area appears on the following page. The intersection is easy enough to find, and the rest of the directions are straightforward. However, the fifth sentence has two interpretations. The PCs might think they have to turn at a kip with a *green* roof and a *thatched* door, and there *is* such a place (see the map). If they take the wrong turn, though, they'll soon know it, since they'll run into an empty lot with no kips around at all.

If the heroes follow the directions correctly, they eventually end up back where they started, at the corner of Whisper Way and Gouge Row—the Xaositects like to demonstrate the chaos embodied by the Unity of Rings. A nondescript hovel sits on each corner of the intersection. All four kips have shattered windows, but one building—the Xaositect safe house—has slightly more than the others.

◆ T⊕⊕ MANY KARANS ◆

When the cutters knock on the rusty iron door of the safe house, a small panel slides back, and a weary voice from within sighs: "Your token, please." The PCs must show the crimson coin they got from Yaxis; the panel slides shut and the door swings open. (If they try to give the token to the hidden doorman, he tells 'em to keep it.)

Inside, the doorman—a decrepit dwarf named Hoy Bristlebeard (Pr/♂ dwarf/0-level/Xaositects/CG)—gets down from his stool and wearily waves the heroes into the building. "The big room in the back, down the hole you go, that's right, let's sodding move it along, hmm?" Sure enough, a

large, gutted parlor in the back of the dusty hovel has a jagged hole in the floor, where a strong ladder leads down into a dim, underground hallway. The passage grows noisy with many voices as the PCs travel from one end to the other, and after a few minutes, they emerge into a bright room that's as wide as it is stark. The ceiling's quite low, and the cutters can make out more roughly hewn hallways leading off from other walls, but it's hard to see much of anything right away, what with the dozens of bashers milling about, filling the chamber with a crowd of conversations.

The PCs can see (and talk to) planewalkers, adventurers, and hirelings of every race, gender, and class, though there doesn't seem to be anything that'd qualify as a monster. And if it hasn't already dawned on the heroes, a few comments reveal that everyone in the room was invited to hear an offer of employment from high-ups in the Xaositect faction. No two groups were lured in exactly the same manner, though all carry a token like that of the PCs (each a different color and stamped with a different creature).

Before long, a group of 15 Xaositects saunters into the room from one of the far passages. Eleven of them are identical male githzerai dressed alike. The others include Yaxis, a blond, muscle-bound bruiser named Mordrigaarz Antill

WHY ELEVEN? WHY N0+? —POSSSEL PECKICH

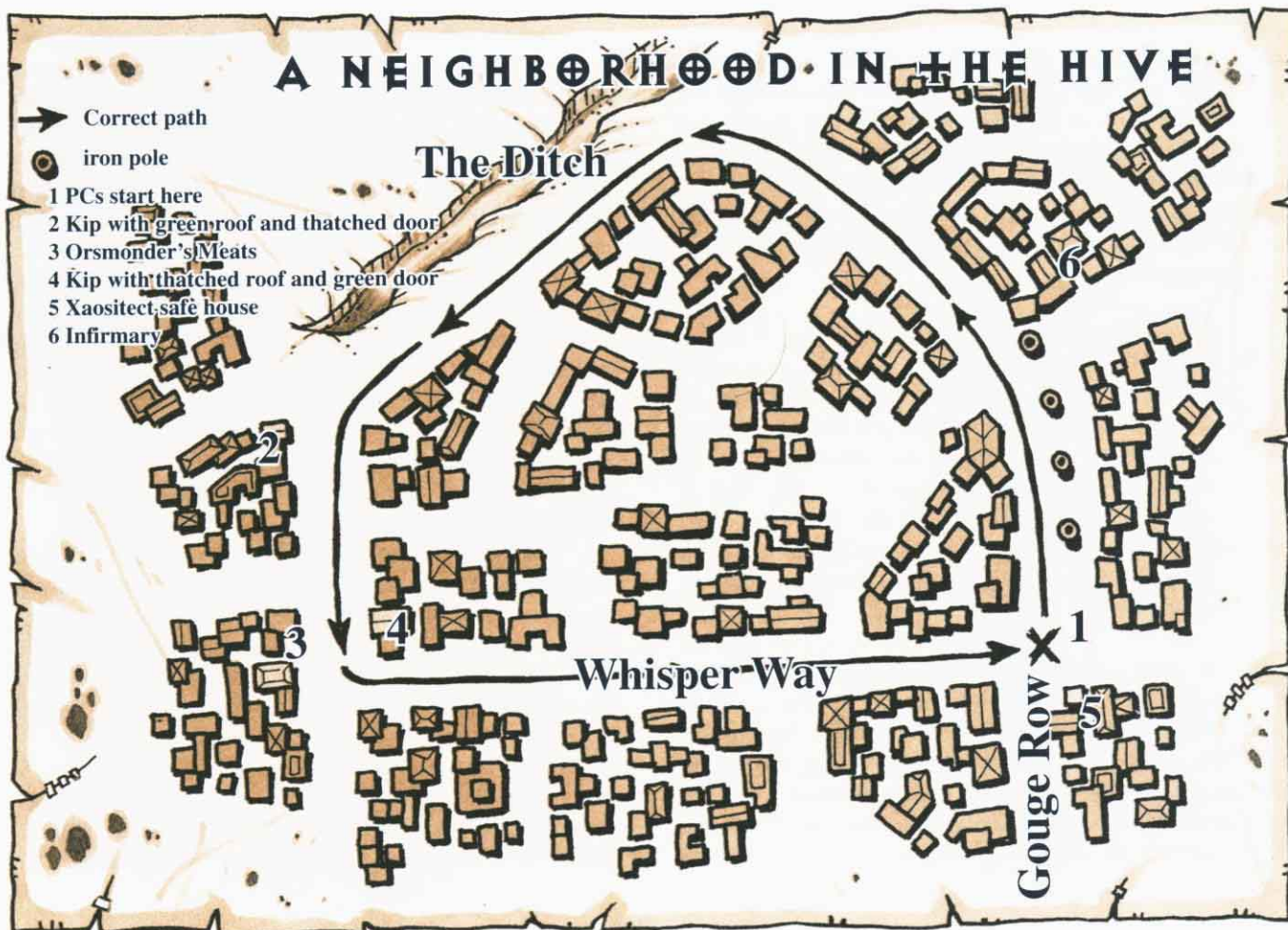
(Pl/♂ human/F5/Xaositects/CN), a towering blood known as Waleena of the Nine Hills (Pr/♀ human/F8/Xaositects/CG), and a bariaur with golden-dyed fur named Possel Peckich (Pl/♂ bariaur/C6/Xaositects/CN).

Peckich thumps a large walking staff on the ground to get everyone's attention, introduces himself and his three comrades (but not the 11 lookalikes), and addresses the crowd.

"Thank you all for coming," the bariaur calls out in smooth baritone voice. "Please drop the tokens you received in the sack that Yaxis will bring around. Meanwhile, I'll explain why you're here."

The aasimar moves through the crowd with an open bag, smiling as each group drops its token in the sack. When she reaches the PCs, she doesn't pay them any special notice—they're just one party of many.

"Factol Terrance of the Athar—gone. Factol Pentar of the Doomguard—gone. Indeep high-ups Bria Tomay, Lethea, and Lysander—gone. And our chant-mongers have heard of other faction leaders who haven't seemed to be around during the last week or so, though that's unconfirmed and denied by the rest of their flocks."



"You've probably seen those Eschaton berks out in the streets, predicting that these are the end times. Well, we don't know what's happening. We just don't want it to happen to us. And it won't." Peckich gestures at the identical githzerai behind him. "One factol's a sitting modron. But eleven? With eleven, the promise of chaos will see us through. With eleven, the truth of chance will keep us safe."

Yaxis finishes collecting the tokens, walks over to the knot of 11 githzerai, and hands each the sack in turn. Each pulls out one token, as Peckich continues.

"While the real Factol Karan spends the next few days in safety, these eleven decoys will roam the Cage in full public view to draw out the berks behind the—well, behind whatever's happening. And that's where you come in, friends: To polish the ruse, to make each Karan seem like the real one, they all must be guarded by a gang of capable bashers. It'd look too odd for a factol to walk alone through Sigil at a time like this."

"It should be easy work. Make it look good, and afterward you'll be amply rewarded. Jink, muscle, portal keys, the use of our top spellslingers—whatever you want, we'll get it for you."

As a ripple of greed and possibility runs through the crowd, Peckich nods to the 11 githzerai. One by one, each calls out a description of the token he drew from the sack. As he does so, a large image of that token appears above the heads of the party to which it had been given, thanks to a small enchantment. The eighth Karan lookalike announces that his token is "crimson, stamped with a red slaad," and that image immediately appears above the PCs. When all decoys have been matched with a bodyguard group, Peckich resumes speaking.

"Eleven false factols. Eleven stalwart groups to defend them. Each party, step up and meet your Karan, then escort him out into the city. Remember that your decoy must be treated at all times as if he were the real thing—you never know when peery eyes will be upon you. Respect your decoy and follow his wishes. Return here in three days' time to claim your reward. And to any groups whose tokens weren't drawn from the sack: Sorry that you weren't needed. As you leave, Antill or Waleena will give you a little something for your trouble."

The three or four unwanted adventuring parties file out, stopping to collect their consolation prize: a small bauble that reflects light in a soothing manner. Truth is, the baubles're portal keys, and the Xaositects herd the groups (one at a time) out through a special passage that runs through a hidden portal to Limbō. Thus, the sods're shunted off to the swirling plane, where scores of Xaositect anarchs

imprison them in chaos-stuff for the duration of the ruse. They can't let the sods run loose in the Cage—not with knowledge of the decoy scheme.

Meanwhile, Peckich and Yaxis supervise as each false Karan comes together with his new bodyguards. If the PCs study the decoys, they notice (on a successful Intelligence check) that the 11 berks aren't really identical at all. For example, they all sport the same blue-ink tattoo on their heads as the real Karan, but one decoy has it over his left ear, one has it over his right, another has it on his forehead, and so on. Mustaches aren't the same length. Some decoys wear boots; some are barefoot.

MEETING RR'KA

The PCs' decoy is Rr'ka, a faction namer who's thrilled to have been chosen for this important duty. He greets them cordially and seems quite excited by the prospect of standing in for his leader. But his long mustache is actually glued to his clean-shaven face, and it frequently slips and needs to be repositioned. The strands of Rr'ka's top knot fall forward and dangle in his eyes, as if he's not used to wearing his hair that way. And then there's the matter of his personality—the sod's a ham, and when he plays the part of his charismatic leader, he overdoes it and comes across as a bit pompous and phony. Fact is, Rr'ka just ain't that good an actor.

Peckich remains long enough to answer any questions. If asked, he even whispers the location of the real Karan (who's holed up at the Bottle & Jug tavern, watching the boxing matches). The decoys haven't been given any specific instructions—they're just supposed to wander their assigned ward and let chaos work through them. Rr'ka's been tagged for the Market Ward, so as soon as the PCs are ready, they can escort him there and begin playing their roles.

THE REAL CHANT: Rr'ka is the real Factol Karan, doing his best to act as if he's an ordinary berk trying to act like the factol. The Xaositects believe in hiding in plain sight, figuring it'll further confuse the villains. To help the scam, the real Rr'ka is nestled in the Bottle & Jug, pretending to be Karan. That's why Peckich was willing to spill the beans about where the "real" factol is hiding. If the chant about the Bottle & Jug leaks out, it'll just help confuse the issue and safeguard the true Karan.

Only three folks in all of Sigil know the dark of the plan: Karan, Rr'ka, and Peckich. However, the bariaur gives the PCs no indication whatsoever that their decoy is anything other than what he appears. Note that until the heroes learn the truth about their charge (at the end of the chapter), the text will refer to him as "Rr'ka," since that's how the party knows him.

RR'KA (PL/♂ GITHZERAI/F9/XAOSITECTS/CN): AC 2 (chain mail, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 89; THACO 11 (Str bonus); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+1 (scimitar, Str bonus) or 1d4+1 (dagger, Str

bonus) SA spell-like power; SD infravision 60'; *babble*, *non-detection*, *confusion*, *plane shift*, *major creation*; MR 45%; SZ M (6' tall); ML fearless (19); XP 6,000.

Notes: Rr'ka hides any use of his *major creation* power, as it might provide a clue that he's more than he seems.

SA—during the time period he spends with the PCs, random chance grants Rr'ka a spell-like power equal to a *wand of wonder* (2/day).

SD—confuse all verbal communication within 30' with *babble* (reverse of *tongues*, 1/week); permanent *non-detection* from spells cast by lawful wizards or priests; radiate a 20' radius of *confusion* that lasts 2d6 rounds (1/day); *plane shift* at will, though not into or out of Sigil; summon chaos-stuff to create an object that lasts for 9 rounds with *major creation* (3/day).

S 17, D 17, C 18, I 16, W 15, Ch 17.

Special Equipment: chain mail, scimitar, 4 daggers, brooch of alignment detection, 200 sp.

◆ GUARDING RR'KA ◆

Whether the PCs take Rr'ka to the Market Ward right away or wait until morning, they hit the blinds—the githzerai won't go to the Market Ward. "I've changed my mind," he says. "I'd much rather wander through The Lady's Ward." He won't listen to arguments, dismissing any objections by saying, "You're supposed to treat me like the real factol. That means you do what I say. Do you want your reward or not?"

If necessary, Rr'ka creates a spectacle in public, hoping the PCs'll give in just to shut him up and stop him from drawing attention. Fact is, the githzerai comes dangerously close to having a tantrum. And unfortunately for the heroes, that sets the tone for the rest of their time with him. Rr'ka plans to roam The Lady's Ward doing two things: causing trouble and basking in the glory of being recognized as "Factol Karan."

The PCs might eventually realize that the githzerai's cannier than he seems, though. See, when talking with the heroes, he doesn't use scramblespeak at all. But if he's bothered by urchins, bubbers, Hardhead patrols, and the like, he mixes up his words in order to drive the harassers away in frustration—and it usually works.

This part of the chapter's wide open for creativity. The DM should read up on The Lady's Ward in the *PLANESCAPE Campaign Setting*, *In the Cage: A Guide To Sigil*, or even just on pages 8–11 of this book, and then devise a handful of suitably irksome things for Rr'ka to do there. Through it all, the PCs must treat him with the respect due a factol and try to keep him out of trouble. For example, the githzerai might:

- ◆ badger the lawful PCs and encourage the chaotic ones to act more spontaneously;
- ◆ call for help to a passing paladin, claiming that the PCs are trying to kidnap him;



- ♦ rearrange the cobblestones in front of a wealthy blood's mansion in a rude pattern;
- ♦ set all the clocks in the public squares to different times;
- ♦ use his *brooch* to learn the alignments of passersby, which he calls out for all to hear;
- ♦ promise to protect a Xaositect who posed as a servant in a golden lord's High House, only to set fire to a collection of Arcadian fiction.

'Course, the DM shouldn't forget that Xaositects aren't merely pranksters and troublemakers. They just go with the flow of chaos, which leads them to perform admirable deeds just as often—even if those actions end up annoying others. For example, Rr'ka can:

- ♦ offer to help overburdened sods by carrying their sacks, which requires the PCs to help also;
- ♦ promise a hefty donation to one of the many temples in the area, though when he comes up short, he asks the heroes to chip in;
- ♦ spin the prize wheel at the Fortune's Wheel tavern, winning a large payoff each time, which he hands out to other gamblers down on their luck (until he's tossed out by peery bouncers);
- ♦ steal apples, candies, and nuts to give to children he passes on the street, leaving the PCs to appease the irate merchants.

Although the DM has some freedom with this part of the adventure, a few events must occur. As detailed in "Storm Clouds Gather," below, the heroes must pick up the chant about the latest faction tensions—and see a few examples with their own eyes. As detailed in "Petitioner's Square," Rr'ka must lead the cutters to the Square at some point so they can hear the speech given there by Arwyl Swan's Son. Finally, as explained in "Here Comes Trouble," Rr'ka must not perform any action that could be construed as a genuine crime until the DM's ready to move the chapter toward its conclusion. That's because as soon as he goes beyond pranks and fruit-snatching to something more punishable (like vandalism, inciting others to riot, slandering the Lady, or assault and battery), Rr'ka will be scragged by a Harmonium patrol.

STORM CLOUDS GATHER

While traveling through The Lady's Ward—which holds the headquarters of both the Harmonium and the Doomguard—the PCs should see more evidence of the animosity between the

two factions. Someone vandalized the City Barracks during the night, painting the walls of the imposing fortress with entropic slogans (and the symbol of the Revolutionary League). The Harmonium naturally blames the Doomguard and the Anarchists, and Hardhead patrols single out lone Sinkers (or pairs) in the ward for intense questioning. Most Hardheads can be overheard grouching about how the Doomguard and the Anarchists need to be taught a lesson "once and for all." There's talk of imposing a curfew in the ward, or of denying access to bashers who belong to the "wrong" factions.

'Course, there aren't too many Sinkers walking around in The Lady's Ward anyway; chant on the street says they're holed up in the Armory, preparing to defend it against a Harmonium raid. If the PCs pass by the place, they see many nasty-looking berks milling about, apparently trading in old weapons or obtaining new ones. (Ely Cromlich, the cambion in

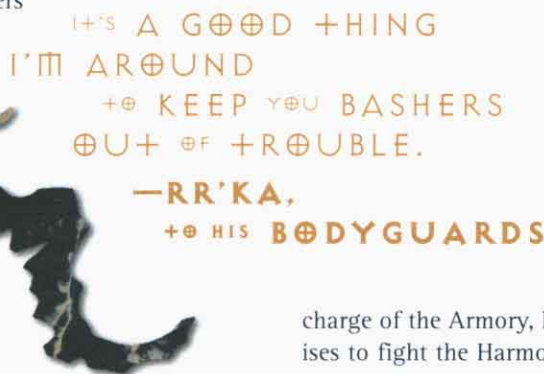
charge of the Armory, has started to arm anyone who promises to fight the Harmonium; see Act II for details.)

What's more, chant-mongers blab that Factol Sarin himself's paid a few visits recently to the Civic Festhall, headquarters of the Sensates, though no one's sure why. Everyone knows that the Sensates and the Hardheads don't get along, right? 'Course, there's no love lost between the Sensates and the Doomguard, either....

While in The Lady's Ward, the PCs might also witness a small band of zealous folks making street-corner pronouncements of imminent doom. Naturally, annoyed Hardheads threaten to scrag 'em unless they move along and shut up. The berks belong to the Eschaton, a group that feels the missing factols and worsening tensions are signs of a looming apocalypse. The Eschaton figures more prominently in Act III; their appearance now is just to make the heroes aware of their existence.

PETITIONER'S SQUARE

At some point, Rr'ka leads the PCs by Petitioner's Square, a public execution spot where Mercykillers hang or behead prisoners in full view of an audience, the better to put the fear of justice into would-be criminals. Today, though, a large crowd's gathered to listen to a speech given by Arwyl Swan's Son, the paladin who serves as second-in-command of the Red Death. Impressively attired, Arwyl stands on the high platform of the gallows, with eight or nine faction bashers standing behind him—along with Rowan Darkwood, who chats quietly with one of the bashers. Darkwood's presence shouldn't strike the PCs as unusual. Just about everyone in the Cage has heard rumors of his romantic relationship with Alisohn Nilesia, factol of the Red Death. They're often seen in public together. But today, Nilesia's absent.



Soon after the heroes arrive, a tiefling (PI/♂ tiefling/R6/Mercykillers/LN) and a githyanki (PI/♀ githyanki/M7/Fated/CE) nearby start arguing. The tiefling accuses Darkwood of cowardice for hiding behind the Mercykillers, while the githyanki defends his bravery for appearing at all—unlike Nilesia. The tiefling won't give in, claiming that Darkwood ran to the Red Death for protection because he received death threats from a violent old barmy who nearly escaped from the Gatehouse.

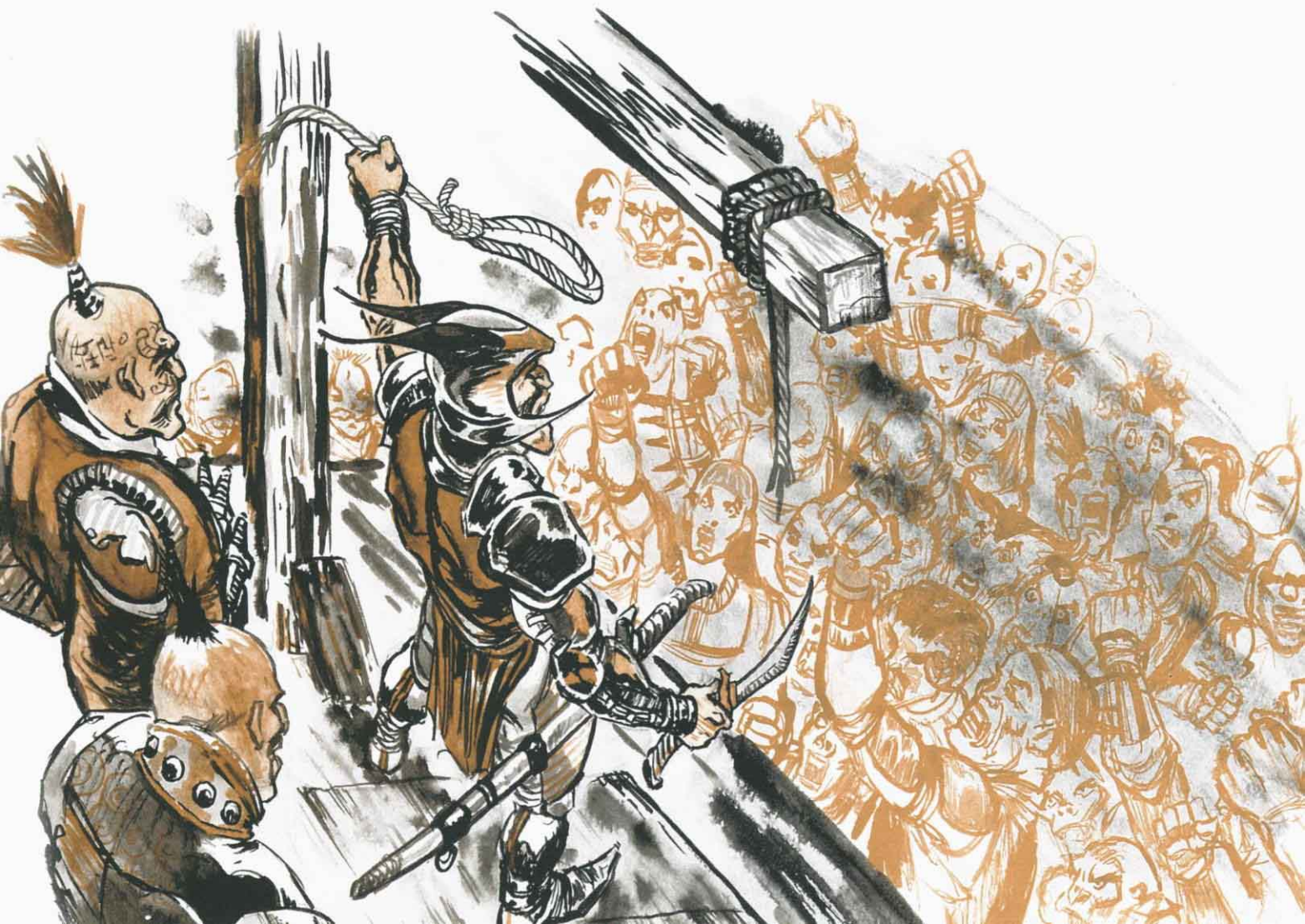
Meanwhile, Arwyl rambles on about the purpose of the Mercykillers and the importance of justice, but soon his speech takes an unexpected turn. His voice choking with emotion, the paladin says that an “unfortunate incident” (Nilesia’s disappearance, which faction high-ups have kept secret) has shaken the Red Death to its core and caused the faction to splinter.

Long ago, when the Lady of Pain limited the number of factions allowed in the Cage, two separate groups—the mercenary Sodkillers and the noble Sons of Mercy—came together to form the Mercykillers, figuring that in union they’d find strength. Now, the faction’s breaking down along those lines again. The brutal, punishment-obsessed (and mostly evil) bashers despise Arwyl’s “softness” and have left to re-form the Sodkillers. Good-aligned cutters

who place clean, honest justice above all feel the faction’s become tainted under Nilesia’s reign, so they left and took the name the Sons of Mercy. That leaves a large group of neutral sods who don’t know which way to turn; they retain the Mercykiller name, but they’re as confused as green primes in Sigil.

The paladin explains the new order of things as best he can, promising that the Sons of Mercy—with him as leader—will be a force for good in Sigil. He also thanks Rowan Darkwood (who smiles and nods) for his efforts “to help the Sons establish themselves in the Cage in this time of crisis.” Arwyl then unfurls a scroll and announces that he’s ordered the release of over a thousand unjustly jailed berks who’re currently rotting in the Prison. What’s more, he’s rolling back Nilesia’s harsh sentencing guidelines—from this day forward, a body’s punishment will truly fit his crime, and no one need fear suffering beyond the allowances of honest law.

As Arwyl symbolically cuts down the noose swinging from the gallows, the crowd erupts into cheers, boos, howls, insults, and pleas to free their favorite uncle. Arwyl, Darkwood, and the Sons of Mercy descend from the platform and head for the Prison to begin the bureaucratic process of releasing offenders.



Player character Mercy-killers probably feel as if the rug's just been pulled out from under them. Arwyl's news comes as a complete surprise. (Remember, the faction high-ups kept Nilesia's disappearance—and their subsequent troubles—secret.)

THE REAL CHANT: Darkwood sold Nilesia to the fiends, of course, but Arwyl believes that Rowan's stepped forward to help rebuild the faction despite the troubling disappearance of his beloved. Unfortunately, the Duke's just stringing the paladin along until the prisoners are released, at which time he'll turn to the Sodkillers and use *them* to further inflame the war.

The barmy referred to by the tiefling is Gifad—the Duke's older (and crazier) self. And his chant ain't quite right. Gifad did try to break free from the Gatehouse, but he didn't issue death threats against Darkwood; he merely wanted to snatch the berk's precious ebony gem. It's important for the PCs to hear this bit of chant, even if at the moment it only seems like a meaningless detail.

HERE COMES ◆ TROUBLE ◆

The whole time that Rr'ka leads the PCs around The Lady's Ward, they're secretly trailed by Anton Levels skull and a group of Hardheads—enough to provide at least two opponents for each player character. Levels skull's out to teach the heroes a lesson for sticking their noses where they don't belong. (If the opening bar brawl put Levels skull in the dead-book, the DM should replace him with another blood out to avenge his comrade.)

Course, a troop of 10 or more Hardheads ain't exactly subtle, and Levels skull knows it. So he sends the sneakiest member of their group—a priestess known as Shady Syl—up ahead to keep tabs on the party, while the rest of the Hardheads follow at a safe distance, pretending to be an ordinary patrol. Levels skull's original plan was to catch the PCs in the commission of some minor crime and use it as an excuse to pound or scrag them. But Syl trails the heroes closely enough to fall for the decoy ruse; she believes they're truly escorting Factol Karan around the ward. When Levels skull hears the news, he decides to crack two heads with one stone.

His new scheme: Wait for Karan to break a law, then step in and arrest the hated Xaositect. Even Levels skull's not so leatherheaded as to smash a factol—everyone'd come down on the Harmonium, and then the Harmonium'd come down on *him*. Instead, he'll keep the githzerai tied up in legal red tape and bureaucratic hassles for as long as he can.



GIMME A MINUTE, HERE—
I AIN'T USED
+Θ DΘIN' +HIS
BY +HE BΘΘK.
—AN+ΘN LEVELSKULL,
+RYING +Θ REMEMBER
+HE PROCEDURE
FOR ARREST+

Even if the Guvners end up setting Karan free, the whole thing'll knock the Xaositect leader down a few pegs and ruin the PCs' chances of ever getting hired again in Sigil as bodyguards.

Thus, the DM needs to keep a careful eye on what Rr'ka does during his tour of The Lady's Ward. Levels skull won't try to scrag the sod for a minor infraction or anything that could reasonably be contested. He wants to catch the githzerai in a clear violation of an on-the-books law, with no extenuating circumstances. As soon as

Shady Syl spies a crime that fits the bill, she signals Levels skull and the whole Harmonium troop marches confidently up to the PCs. Use the statistics from earlier in the chapter for Levels skull and the Hardheads.

SHADY SYL (Pr/♀ HUMAN/C4/HARMONIUM/LN): AC 4 (*leather armor* +2, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 20; THACO 17 (faction training); #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 (blowgun dart); SD *charm person* (1/day) SZ M (5' tall); ML steady (11); XP 270.

Notes: Obviously, Shady Syl ain't the sneakiest blood in the Cage, but she's all Levels skull could find on such short notice.

S 9, D 16, C 12, I 11, W 15, Ch 16.

Spells (5/3): 1st—*cure light wounds*, *detect magic*, *know faction*, *magical stone*, *sanctuary*; 2nd—*dictate* (Harmonium spell described in the *Planewalker's Handbook* or *Factol's Manifesto*), *obscurement*, *silence* 15' radius.

Special Equipment: *leather armor* +2, blowgun, pouch of 12 darts.

GΘ+CHA!

Levels skull makes a heroic (but somewhat futile) attempt to maintain an air of professionalism when confronting Rr'ka and the PCs. He desperately wants the arrest to stick and struggles mightily to avoid any sign of violence, bullying, or even name-calling—any of which might give the cutters a reason to cry foul to the Guvners when the matter comes to court. Throughout the encounter, though, he lets slip a few under-the-breath digs at the heroes, and his mannerisms—clenched teeth, forced laughter, and so on—betray his inner fury.

At this point, the Xaositect probably surprises the PCs by surrendering. "You got me square and fair, good my thugs. Go let's." It's simply what the winds in his brain-box guide him to do. His instincts tell him that the Hardheads won't do him harm, but he figures that if they *are* responsible for the missing factols, this is as good a way as any to find out.

The PCs, on the other hand, aren't likely to let Rr'ka go without a fight—or at least an argument. But with odds of

two or more to one, the cutters probably wouldn't do well in battle, especially since the ward's full of other Hardheads who'd come running at a moment's notice. And observant PCs can tell that Levels skull's cool façade could fall at any moment, with violent results.

Smooth talking's no help, either. No matter what the heroes say, their words fall on deaf ears. Even the revelation that their charge isn't really Factol Karan gets them nowhere—the Hardheads just won't believe it. And if offered jink to look the other way, they righteously threaten to scrag the player characters for attempted bribery. (That alone should tell the PCs that something strange is going on.)

For his part, Rr'ka advises the cutters to stand down. He thanks them for their services, but explains that his faction'll get him out of this mess in no time. All he asks is that one or more PCs return to the Hive Ward and let the bariaur Possel Peckich know what's happened.

Barely able to keep himself in check any longer, Levels skull slaps *planar mancatchers* on the prisoner and orders him taken to a Harmonium holding cell, there to await trial. If the heroes demand to come along, Levels skull consents, but the Hardheads keep a close eye on the cutters every step of the way. In any case, the PCs're barred from entering the City Barracks. Members of the Harmonium can get in, of course, but they're not allowed to accompany Rr'ka to his cell. Thus, at some point, the githzerai will be out of the player characters' sight.

THE DARK REVEALED

At least one PC must go back to the Hive Ward and find Possel Peckich. The safe house where the cutters first met him is empty, and it takes about an hour of asking around to find a Xaositect who knows that Peckich is tending to wounded sods at a ramshackle infirmary not far away (see the Hive map on page 47).

When the heroes describe Rr'ka's arrest, Peckich's fur bristles. "Oh, dear, oh, dear, oh, dear," he mutters, clopping his hooves nervously. "Bad is this. Is very this bad. This scheme him against I barmy warned." The PCs need to calm Peckich enough to get the dark from him in a manner they can understand. And the bariaur does spill the beans, revealing that Rr'ka is the real Factol Karan and babbling on and on about the decoys, the ruse, the reasoning behind it, what he had for breakfast, and anything else run over by his train of thought.

In short order, Peckich sends for "Sly" Nye (Pl/♂ tiefling/B4/Xaositects/CN), a colorful lawyer well known for winning cases through chaos. He and Nye ask the PCs to accompany them to the City Barracks to help speak for Karan. At the Barracks, Levels skull himself entertains the group's pleas and legal requests, but at most, he takes them to see the prisoner—that's all.

Unfortunately, while Karan paced in his holding cell, the Lady of Pain chose that time to whisk him off to the

Mazes. No one saw it happen, either. Thus, when Levels skull escorts Peckich, Nye, and the PCs to see the githzerai, he's just as surprised as anyone to find the berk missing—and the cell still locked tight!

◆ ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE ◆

Because the *planar mancatchers* lie on the floor of the cell, the Hardheads claim that the githzerai must've gotten free of his bonds and shifted to a bolt-hole elsewhere in Sigil. Peckich and Nye don't believe it for a second, accusing the bruisers of "dispensing" with the prisoner. A furious yelling match ensues that probably draws in the heroes as well.

Just as the confrontation seems ready to erupt into physical violence, shouts and cries issue from the outer areas of the Barracks. Suddenly, a thin guard (Pl/♂ human/F2/Harmonium/LG) stumbles into the room, white as a sheet and visibly trembling.

The sod's so pale that he looks more like a Dustman than a Hardhead. His mouth moves as if trying to speak, but no words come out. Finally, he finds his voice, strained and weak: "Dead. He's dead. I—he—"

The man clears his throat. "It just happened a few minutes ago. An arrow of some kind. Right—right through his heart. Right out in the street. Everyone saw. He's dead. "Factol Sarin is dead."

It's true. A cell of Anarchist assassins tracked Sarin as his entourage made its way to the Civic Festhall for another meeting with the Sensates. Using an enchanted arrow obtained from Ely Cromlich, they killed the factol just a few blocks from the Festhall's entrance. Most of the culprits fled before anyone knew what'd happened, but one was caught and beaten to death by the angry crowd—even as he shouted that the Doomguard and the Anarchists would at long last bring doom to the oppressors of Sigil.

Upon hearing the news, Levels skull and the rest of the Hardheads forget about Karan, Nye, Peckich, the PCs—everything, really. The chant spreads through the Barracks like a plague through the Hive, and within moments, scores of Harmonium pour out into the streets of the Cage, howling for Sinker and Anarchist blood.

War is finally at hand.

◆ NEXT ◆

Several days pass between the end of this chapter and the start of the next one. During that time, a lot happens in the Cage; see the Timeline for details. The DM can let the PCs live through those days just like everyone else in Sigil, creating scenes and encounters as desired, or jump ahead and let the chant fill in what the heroes missed.

ACT II: THE BATTLE AT THE ARMORY

In retrospect, it seemed obvious that the war would come. Inevitable. How could we expect more than 600 years of peace in a place like Sigil? Once the factols began to disappear, we should have all just run for cover or fled out of town or something until it was all over.

—Faragoh Naeil, *After the Smoke Cleared*

◆ IN BRIEF ◆

With the factols gone and tensions flaring, the Cage prepares for war. The first (and largest) battle of the faction war takes place around the Armory and leads up to a cataclysm unlike any seen in the City of Doors in centuries.

◆ THE CHANT ◆

"Well, that's it then. There's going to be war."

"The Cage's come close to blows before. They'll settle down, don't you worry. The factions pout and prance a lot, but it's all just show. Nobody's barmy enough to fight a war here in Sigil."

"What're you, an addle-cove? The factols are gone! Don't you get it? Nobody's minding the store. Nobody's guarding the guardians. No one's in power to keep the war from happening!"

THAT SWORD'S
A FINE BLADE,
DON'T YOU WORRY.
THE ONLY THING
HARDHEAD MAKE IT BETTER
IS A LITTLE
HARDHEAD BLOOD
ON IT.
—ELY CROMLICH

Much has happened since Anarchist assassins killed Factol Sarin. By now, the war has taken on a definite shape as factions declare allegiances and enemies. Old resentments flare up or are forgotten as new threats arise.

On one side, the Doomguard and the Anarchists were the first to align due to Rowan Darkwood's machinations. The Free League, tired of Hardhead oppression, joins up when the Harmonium begins obviously preparing for war. And the Sodkillers, the most ruthless of the former Mercykillers, throw in with the Doomguard for the weapons and the chance to spread their twisted definition of "justice" without opposition. Dubbed the "enemies of peace" by the Harmonium, this alliance does harbor some of the more violent residents of Sigil—but it also draws a number of folks concerned for their freedoms and rights within the city.

Meanwhile, the Harmonium and the Society of Sensation—often opponents in the Hall of Speakers—join forces to protect themselves against growing Sinker and Anarchist aggression. This alliance takes most Cagers by surprise and worries many. The Hardheads were already a major force in Sigil; how much stronger might they become with the political insight and experience of the Sensates behind them? Just before the adventure begins, the Sons of Mercy pledge their support to the Harmonium, hoping to restore peace to the city through the application of law and justice. Naturally, the Sinkers and Anarchists use this declaration to claim that the "oppressors of Sigil" are preparing to take over the city by force.

The rest of the factions seem to hold their breath, waiting for the storm to break. The Bleak Cabal had, in fact, been invited to join the Doomguard side of the conflict, but the Bleakers refused and retreated into the Gatehouse. Other factions find themselves embroiled in internal conflict as they cope with the loss of their factols and the growing threat of all-out war. Even the normally placid Guvners swear vengeance when a Xaositect murderer—ironically, one of those released by the Sons of Mercy when they "cleaned up" the Prison—kills Factol Hashkar. Hashkar is the last factol to fall, and with his death the possibility of war becomes a certainty.

◆ THE DARK ◆

Although minor eruptions of violence have already occurred due to Darkwood's machinations, the Battle at the Armory is the first major conflict of the faction war. The DM is encouraged to let the PCs hear of the brewing minor conflicts before thrusting them into the events of this chapter—perhaps even involving them in one or more such incidents.

◆ BACKGROUND ◆

When Factol Pentar disappeared, Ely Cromlich, the cambion in charge of the Doomguard's Armory, let the chant spread that anyone willing to swear violence upon the Harmonium could come to him and receive a free weapon of choice, possibly even a magical weapon. Being a tanar'ri (at least in part), he seeks to spread chaos in the Cage and send most of it the way of the Harmonium, the faction that most directly threatens him and his cache of weapons. The evil, vicious members of the newly formed Sod-killers took full advantage of Cromlich's sudden generosity. The more warlike among the Anarchists and Indeps also flocked to the Armory to procure weapons. Their numbers include a fair number of the criminals recently set free by Arwyl Swan's Son.



Suddenly, without warning, the Harmonium, the Sons of Mercy (the Sodkillers' opposite number), and the Sensates attack the Armory. The Hardheads are particularly intent on capturing the Armory and disabling the Doomguard, since it was a Sinker arrow that put their beloved Factol Sarin in the dead-book.

◆ SET UP ◆

PCs with an eye toward Doomguard sympathies probably come to the Armory for weapons. Even if they don't care at all for politics, they might show up anyway for the free equipment. The Sinkers are literally handing out arms of war, some of them magical, all of them of fine craftsmanship. All a body's got to do is pledge to use the weapon against the Harmonium.

The player characters can ask for whatever weapon they wish. A flat 20% chance exists that the requested weapon carries an enchantment. Of those distributed enchanted weapons, 80% have a +1 bonus, and the rest have a +2 bonus. Cromlich saves the really good weapons for himself and the rest of the Doomguard. Almost all of the Sinkers in the Armory at this point have at least +1 weapons. Half or more have at least +2 weapons, and about a quarter wield +3 weapons or those with special abilities. This fact holds true for Doomguard PCs present as well—the DM should determine the potency of the weapons gained by such characters, feeling free to give them an “unbalancing” item since it lasts only for this battle and no longer (see below).

If the PCs lean more toward the Harmonium or the Sensates, they hear the chant that the Hardheads will lead a large force to confiscate the Doomguard's horde of weapons and bring the Sinker high-ups to justice. They're free to join in of their own volition or just show up to see if it really occurs.

If the PCs don't come to the Armory of their own free will, they're approached by either Blisset or Yorrich Mi, both of whom are looking for recruits to join in the coming struggle. The DM should choose which recruiter approaches the PCs, selecting whichever has the best chance to involve them in the action (although using both might be interesting as well).

Blisset works for the Anarchists, but she wears the symbol of the Doomguard, the Indeps, or the Sodkillers depending on which she thinks the PCs will react more favorably to (relying on a few quick observations from a short distance, where she finds them, and so on). Blisset attempts to recruit them to help the Doomguard side of the coming conflict. In fact, she and her Anarchist cell sneak around the City of Doors attempting to dredge up as much direct and indirect support for the Sinkers and their allies as they can. They see the coming struggles as a significant step toward bringing down the Harmonium, who they see as the first of their enemies to be eliminated. Blisset's cell isn't far off in its observation.

Blisset tells the PCs that the Harmonium plans to start a war with the Doomguard to suppress their right to bear arms in the Cage. She says that the Hardheads eventually

want to be the only bashers allowed to carry weapons in all of Sigil. (This is a lie, but a fairly believable one considering Harmonium beliefs.) She attempts to portray the Harmonium and their allies as oppressive and tyrannical, and their enemies as oppressed and freedom loving. Plus, she'll point out, the Sinkers'll dole out free chivs to any basher who fights back against Harmonium oppression.

BLISSET (PL/♀ HUMAN/T9/REVOLUTIONARY LEAGUE/N): AC 4 (*leather armor +1*, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 42; THACO 16 (14 with thrown daggers); #AT 1 or 3; Dmg 2d4 (broadsword) or 1d4 (throwing dagger); SD mimic other factions, ×4 backstab; SZ M (5'7" tall); ML fanatic (17); XP 2,000.

S 14, D 17, C 13, I 14, W 11, Ch 15.

Special Equipment: *leather armor +1* (Sigil made), *gloves of snaring*.

Thief Abilities: PP 70, OL 62, F/RT 60, MS 70, HS 56, HN 30, CW 98, RL 45.

Yorrich Mi also works as a recruiter, but for the Sons of Mercy and their cause. Straightforward and sincere, he believes that the Doomguard, with a “creature of the Abyss at the helm” presents the greatest threat to Sigil that the city's ever faced, and that the warlike faction must be stopped before it's too late. He wanders the Cage looking for “heroes” to help fight against this evil, but plans on soon joining his comrades as they move to attack. He says that the Harmonium will pay those willing to fight for their cause (25 gp per day for bloods like the PCs—much less for common sword-arms), but he encourages them to help simply because it's the right thing to do.

YORRICH MI (PL/♂ HUMAN/PAL7/SONS OF MERCY/LG): AC 0 (*plate mail +2*, shield); MV 12; hp 55; THACO 14 (12 with broadsword); #AT 3/2; Dmg 2d4+5 (*broadsword +2* and Str bonus); SD lay on hands to heal 14 hp 1/ day, *protection from evil 10' radius*, +2 to saving throws; SZ M (6'1" tall); ML champion (16); XP 1,400.

S 18/41, D 9, C 15, I 10, W 13, Ch 17.

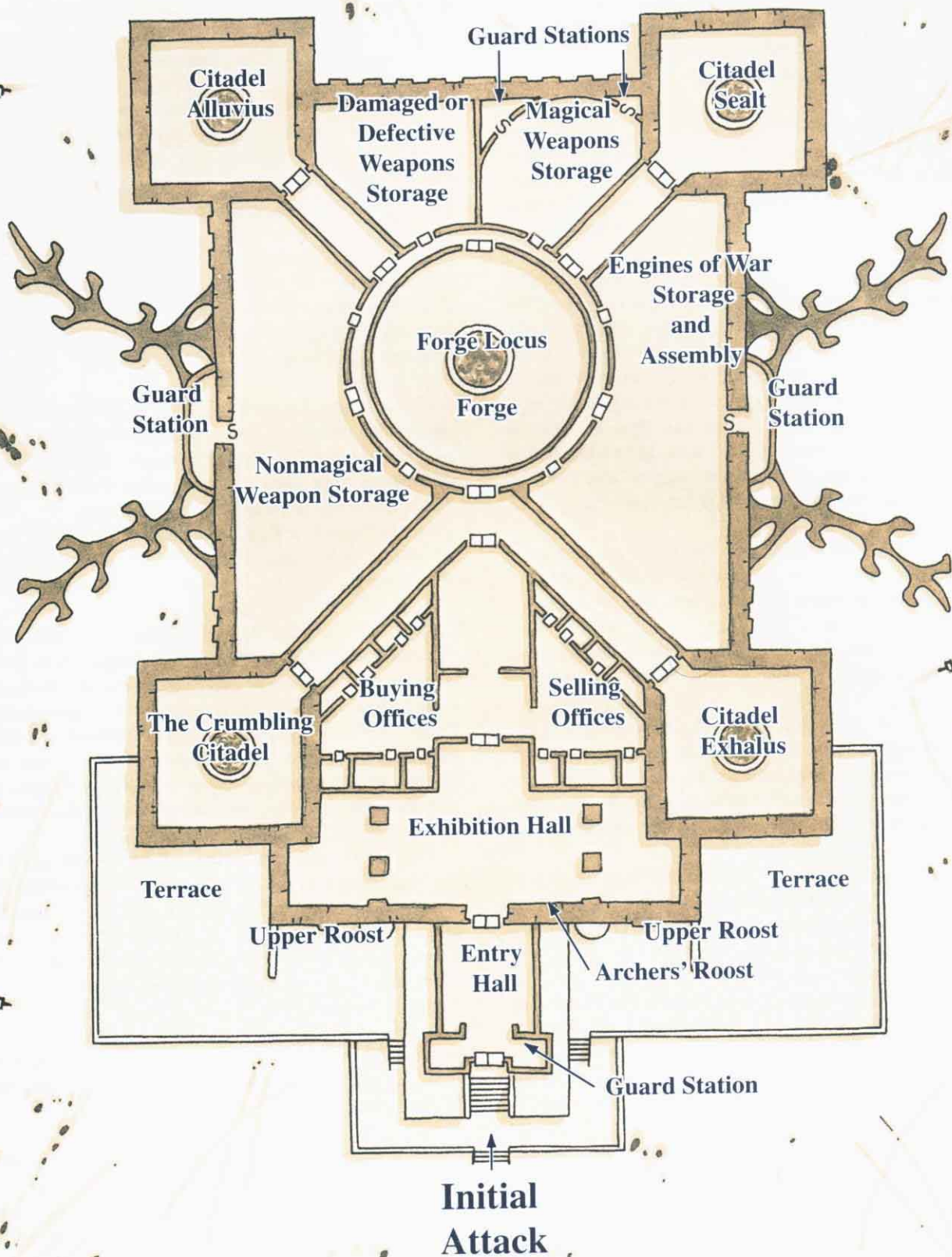
Special Equipment: *plate mail +2*, *broadsword +2* (both Sigil forged), *potion of flying*.

The attack on the Armory catches the Sinkers and their allies outside the protection of the Armory's walls, as they examine and compare their new weapons. The battle begins immediately, with both sides eager to test their mettle against their foes. The DM should also remember that each side still blames the other for the disappearance of their respective factols.

News of the bloody battle spreads through the Cage faster than most chant. If all else fails, the PCs may show up at the site of the battle when they hear the news. By the time they arrive, the battle has settled down into a siege, with piles of corpses already stacked around the gates of the Armory where the initial combatants fell.

THE ARMORY

20 feet



◆ THE ARMORY ◆

The events of this chapter occur entirely within The Lady's Ward, where the Armory lies. This faction headquarters functions as a veritable fortress. The stone walls stand 10 feet thick, and the solid foundation raises the entire structure high above street level to prevent tunnels or sappers. Individual areas are described below.

TERRACE. This flat stone area rises about 20 feet above the street level. On a normal day, various Sinkers and those with business in and around the building mill about here, usually with a sort of quiet reverence. Eight-foot-tall iron spikes mark the edge of the raised area, forming an intimidating wall.

ENTRY HALL. Thick steel doors bind each end of this entrance area. Eight Doomguard watchmen stand guard here during normal times (during the battle, many more will do so). The central area of the hall has an antimagic barrier running down its length. The energies placed here function like an *antimagic shell*, but the effects persist on anyone or anything passing through it for 3d6 rounds. Thus, no spells or magical effects function within this area, and spellcasters or magical items cannot use spells or magical abilities after passing through the area until the effect wears off.

ARCHERS' ROOST. Accessible via the upper levels of the Armory, this spot serves as an excellent high point for bowmen or crossbowmen to help defend the entrance.

UPPER ROOSTS. Like the Archers' Roost, these smaller areas can hold four or five bowmen to help defend the Armory.

EXHIBITION HALL. In normal times, this area showcases the finest Doomguard weaponsmithing. The Sinkers use mannequins, racks, glass cases, and ceiling hooks to display the weapons. When Ely Cromlich begins handing out free arms, the Doomguard use this spot to conduct the transactions.

BUYING AND SELLING OFFICES. These rooms hold the paperwork necessary to record the business of buying and selling weapons. The Doomguard buy virtually any chiv, but they rarely give a body a good price.

FORGE. Open to the sky, this round chamber holds the fires and tools used to create most of the weapons found in the Armory. On an average day, 10 to 20 smiths work here, producing weapons at an astounding rate (and of astounding quality as well).

FORGE LOCUS. The Harmonium attackers direct their attacks toward this place central to the forge. A powerful magical item in its own right, this cauldron of seething energy imbues many of the weapons made here with potent and destructive enchantments, varying by the will of the craftsmen and the

time invested in the process. The attackers hope to destroy the locus because in so doing, all of the magical weapons forged here lose their power—a little secret that the Doomguard never told those who purchased weapons from them. The locus is powerful but fragile; more than 4 hp of damage—whether inflicted intentionally or inadvertently—causes it to burst, inflicting 1d6 points of heat damage to all within 5 feet.

NONMAGICAL WEAPON STORAGE. All three doors leading into this chamber are locked. As the name implies, this chamber contains rack upon rack of weapons of virtually every type. The Doomguard smiths and caretakers keep missile weapons (and the attendant missiles), melee weapons, and pole arms here in great quantity. PCs entering this room may also see a few exotic types, such as miniature and oversized weapons, Baatorian green steel blades, clockwork crossbows from Mechanus, and strange, odd-shaped swords and polearms from throughout the planes. The vast majority of weapons found here are of superior quality.

ENGINES OF WAR STORAGE AND ASSEMBLY. This large room currently holds nine light, six medium, and four heavy ballistae, three catapults (all of different size), a partially constructed siege tower, and eight other war engines (cauldrons, Greek fire projectors, rams, and so on).

LIGHT BALLISTA: THACO 12, 2d6 damage, ROF 1/8, Crew 1

MEDIUM BALLISTA: THACO 14, 3d6 damage, ROF 1/12, Crew 2

DAMAGED OR DEFECTIVE WEAPONS STORAGE. The only door to this room is locked. At first glance, it appears as nothing more than a repository of broken weapons. The name of this room is, in fact, a lie used to cover up a dangerous Doomguard secret. For the past 150 years (or more), the Sinkers have actively sought *spheres of annihilation* with the hopes of one day using their power as weapons of entropy. Over that time, they have gained eight of the magical devices of destruction and collected them in this room.

Cromlich and some others at the Armory have been experimenting with the items, hoping to gain greater control over them as well as increase their size and destructive capability. Unfortunately, these half-finished workings leave the *spheres* in a very vulnerable state. If disturbed now (a likely event as the battle rages), all eight begin moving through the Armory in random directions.

MAGICAL WEAPONS STORAGE. The door to this room is normally locked, although now the room stands nearly empty as most of its contents have been handed out.

GUARD STATION. These areas hold a minimum of five guards at all times who carefully watch over the storage rooms through small eyeholes. When the attack comes these guards continue to watch, but they peer out rather than in, attempting to spy on enemy movements.

TOWER. Each of these four towers is completely empty. However, the doors leading into them are portals that take a traveler to one of the four Sinker citadels on the negative quasialemental planes. The transition through these portals carries little sensation, so it seems that the towers *are* the citadels on the faraway planes.

The towers' portals are always active, yet they have keys. Unlike most other portal keys, these *deactivate* the otherwise always-open doorways. The keys include an iron rod, a jar containing smoke, a jar with water, and a round stone. The high-ups of the Doomguard use them to shut the portals down if danger arises.

UPPER LEVELS (NOT SHOWN ON MAP). The other 23 levels of the Armory are closed to nonfaction members and hold treasures, barracks, meeting rooms, practice halls, and a great many more weapon storehouses—more than almost anyone besides Ely Cromlich even realizes.

◆ DRAMA+IS PERSONAE ◆

All of the cutters involved in this chapter fall into two categories—attackers or defenders.

THE A++ACKING FØRCES

The Harmonium forces (five divisions of 100 troops each) are led jointly by factor Tonat Shar (Pl/♂ human/F9/Harmonium/LG) and Killeen Caine (Pl/♂ half-elf/M15/Harmonium/LN), the commander of the Arcadian branch of the Harmonium. The attackers also include about 75 Sensate warriors led by Annali Webspinner (Pl/♀ bariaur/F7/Society of Sensation/CN) and 50 Sons of Mercy led by Arwyl Swan's Son (Pr/♂ human/Pal17/Sons of Mercy/LG). While warriors comprise the bulk of the attacking forces, 12 Hardhead mages and a handful of Harmonium and Sensate priests accompany the fighters. Most of the Sons of Mercy are paladins.

AVERAGE HARMONIUM SOLDIER (Pl/♂ OR ♀ HUMAN/F3/HARMONIUM/LN): AC 2 (Plate mail, shield); MV 9; hp 18; THACO 17 (faction training); #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long sword); SD *charm person* 1/day; SZ M (6' tall); Int average (10); ML champion (15); XP 120.

AVERAGE SENSATE WARRIOR (Pl/♂ OR ♀ HUMAN/F2/SOCIETY OF SENSATION/N): AC 4 (chain mail, shield); MV 12; hp 11; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); SD +1 to surprise rolls and saving throws vs. poison; SZ M (6' tall); Int average (10); ML average (9); XP 120.

AVERAGE SONS OF MERCY PALADIN (Pl/♂ OR ♀ HUMAN/PAL2/SONS OF MERCY/LG): AC 2 (plate mail, shield); MV 9; hp 15; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4 (broadsword); SD lay on hands to heal 4 hp 1/day, *protection from evil* 10' radius, +2 to saving throws; SZ M (6' tall); Int average (10); ML champion (15); XP 175.

THE DEFENDING FØRCES

The bulk of the defenders owe direct allegiance to the Doomguard. Approximately 300 Sinkers occupy the Armory at the time of the attack, but because of the nature of the Doomguard and their strict entrance requirements, all are ready and willing to fight. (It's often said that the Doomguard requires more unswerving devotion from its membership than other factions by far.) Ely Cromlich (Pl/♂ cambion/F18/Doomguard/CE) leads these forces himself.

Further, between 100 and 120 Anarchists, Sodkillers, and Indeps are in the Armory looking for weapons when the attack begins. They have no direct leaders, at least at the outset (in battle, natural-born leaders often rise to the occasion).

AVERAGE DOOMGUARD WARRIOR (Pl/♂ OR ♀ HUMAN/F3/DOOMGUARD/CN): AC 7 (leather armor, shield); MV 12; hp 16; THACO 18 (17 with sword); #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long sword) or 1d6 (crossbow); SA entropic blow (1/week); SZ M (6' tall); Int average (10); ML elite (13); XP 175.

SA—while engaged in melee with a lawful foe, these Sinkers can try to use their faction's entropic blow; if the attack roll is 5 or more points higher than the number needed to hit, the foe automatically loses half his current hit points.

AVERAGE NON-DOOMGUARD DEFENDER: AC 5 (chain mail); MV 12; hp 12; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword or short bow) or 1d8 (long sword or battle ax); SA varies; SD varies; SZ M (6' tall); Int average (10); ML average (10); XP 35.

Notes: The defenders include Anarchists, Indeps, and Sodkillers, plus a few Bleakers and Xaositects who were in the wrong place at the wrong time. They vary in race, sex, and alignment; the statistics above represent a 2nd-level fighter.

◆ THE FLOW OF EVENTS ◆

The attacking forces aren't as well organized as most of them would like. The Sensates have almost no organization at all (and don't care to follow the orders of the Hardheads), and the Sons of Mercy seem more interested in taking the brunt of the hardship than is strategically wise. Nevertheless, the attackers outnumber the defenders by a fair bit and have caught them unaware.

INITIAL A++ACK

When the attacking forces first arrive, 34 Sinkers and assorted others stand outside. Although some of these bashers are just folks looking for a free weapon hand-out, when the Harmonium troops start advancing on the place (which they do immediately), they fight back purely out of self-defense.

The Hardheads in the first ranks announce, "By the authority vested in the Harmonium, the leaders of the Doomguard faction are under arrest and the weapons in the Armory are to be confiscated. Any who resist will be arrested or slain." The attackers expect initial resistance (but proba-

bly not as much as they get). They also intend to confiscate all weapons within and around the Armory regardless of who owns them or where they were made.

Not surprisingly, a fight breaks out as some of those outside attempt to prevent the Harmonium from gaining entrance and seizing their fairly gained weapons.

After two rounds of combat, those inside realize the situation and mobilize to aid in the defense of the Armory. This first battle occurs on the steps of the faction headquarters and possibly intrudes into the initial Entry Hall. Barring direct PC actions which alter the flow of events, the rest of the battle only continues for about 10 to 12 more rounds before the surviving defenders pull back into the Entry Hall and close the doors. The attackers retreat to a position off the steps and into the street—at least for now.

PC INVOLVEMENT: PCs on the scene (on one side or the other) and in the middle of combat should face a number of opponents at this point. DMs should use one opponent for every three PC levels and place them in direct conflict with the PCs (individually or *en masse*, depending on the actions of the characters).

Most of the NPCs involved in this initial clash are non-spellcasters, as the clerics and mages're being held in reserve. PC priests or wizards can use spells to help prevent or assist the attackers from breaking through the main entrance. (*Wall of fire*, *wall of force*, *glyph of warding*, or *blade barrier* would all be useful for defense, while *lightning bolt*, *confusion*, *fear*, or *disintegrate* quickly make the assault much easier.) At this point, however, the defenders possess the ability to eventually push back the attackers (the antimagic barrier probably plays a major role). Most likely, the battle won't spread into the Exhibition Hall.

If PCs somehow become trapped amidst their foes (attackers suddenly caught inside or defenders outside when the doors close), each side is willing to take prisoners. PCs taken captive might still affect the battle if they somehow manage to escape. (Although captives are guarded, both sides have much more on their minds than watching over prisoners.)

THE SIEGE

On the street, the attackers must decide what to do next. While they plan, they keep the Armory surrounded, cutting off anyone wishing to get in or out. If a body tries to leave the structure, the Hardheads assume that she's a deserter (and thus not worthy of respect) or a spy. Either way, she's scragged and held—despite any pleas or stories that she was just caught in the wrong place at the wrong time. Likewise, a basher trying to break inside's either grabbed or put in the dead-book. There's no reason, in their point of view, why anyone should have a good reason for going in unless it's to help the enemy.

While the troops maintain this perimeter, the high-ups discuss the best plan of attack. (If the PCs are well-known bloods they can join in this discussion as well.) While most prefer a straight-up assault on the front, longing to test

Hardhead might against Doomguard steel, cooler—less battle-barmy—Sensate heads prevail.

Inside, the defenders argue and debate their position and the best way to handle the defense. Most discourage anyone from attempting to escape simply because the attackers won't be easy on a body making the attempt (and they're right).

A few of those inside think that the best offense is a good defense and call for a counterattack. Others say that's barmy Hardhead thinking, and that to win they've got to think "sneaky." Ely Cromlich himself maintains that the Armory must not fall, and that each Sinker should be willing to die defending it against the tyrannical oppressors laying siege outside.

The defenders discuss the placement of troops and the war engines at their disposal, the use of the upper balconies, and similar issues. Some propose fleeing entirely into the towers, giving up the Armory for lost. That's not a popular option at this time. Most Sinkers (and their allies) feel that this is a battle they can win.

PC INVOLVEMENT: This portion of the adventure is very open-ended. The PCs may become involved in the strategic planning for their side, or they may stay out of things. In most cases, the PCs should be of sufficient level and reputation that the forces of whatever side they join welcome their input.

Some characters may take their own initiative in laying a defense or attack, while others await orders from superiors. Conflict may even erupt among "allies" regarding planned courses of action. However, this period lasts only about four hours, after which the final assault begins.

THE FINAL ASSAULT+

Unless the PCs have convinced them otherwise, the attackers launch a three-pronged assault against the Armory. The first spearhead serves as a feint—a full division of Harmonium troops attacks the main entrance, expecting to be repulsed but hoping to occupy the bulk of the defenders. Under the effects of spells such as *fly* and *levitate*, 10 to 15 of the most powerful attackers (including, if applicable, the PCs) descend down into the Armory from above with the intention of destroying the forge locus. Note that half will fly or levitate, while the others are carried. The rest of the attacking forces utilize the *disintegrate*, *transmute rock to mud*, or *lightning bolt* spells of the Harmonium wizards to create a hole in the outer wall leading into the Nonmagical Weapon Storage room.

This last prong of the attack involves creating the breach about 20 feet off the street level and using ladders to reach it, since the main floor of the Armory rises that high above the ground level. The assailants round up 20 ladders before the attack.

Meanwhile, the defenders have moved light and medium ballistae from the Engines of War Storage and Assembly area and placed them in the Exhibition Hall and

the hallway between the Buying and Selling Offices to defend against frontal assault. The different directions of the attack catches them off-guard, and within four or five rounds after the attack has begun, Harmonium, Sensate, and Sons of Mercy soldiers swarm throughout the Armory.

The conflict quickly becomes a disjointed, confusing jumble of separate melees scattered throughout the faction headquarters. Things move from bad to worse when the true secret of the Damaged or Defective Weapons Storage room comes to light, the experiment is disturbed, and the *spheres of annihilation* begin to move randomly throughout the Armory.

PC INVOLVEMENT: As stated above, attacking PCs should be with the strike team moving in from above unless they object. Defending PCs can position themselves wherever they wish, although guarding the forge is a prime assignment. No matter which side the PCs take, the battle in the forge should involve some of the more top-shelf characters from either side. The DM is encouraged to use NPC opponents of levels at least equal to that of the PCs in that encounter (simply increase the levels of the characters noted above and provide them with 1d3 magical items).

If the PCs aided Spragg the Doomguard in Act I, he'll help them out at a key moment in this battle. If the PCs fight alongside the Doomguard, the assistance is substantial—he gives them a particularly good weapon, shows them around the Armory, and more. If the PCs fight against Spragg's side, he *still* gives them some help, but it will be in a minor, one-time way—redirecting Doomguard troops away from them, for example. He'll not go so far as to turn stag on his own side.

The DM should keep track of what's going on at all times throughout the battle—even in areas of which the PCs have no direct awareness or contact. The heroes will likely move around within the Armory and the DM should be prepared for them to deal with any portion of the conflict.

If the forge locus is destroyed, all weapons ever created in this magical forge lose their magical power. While they still hold up as finely crafted chivs, the weapons no longer possess any enchantment. This effect may be enough to change the tide of battle if the defenders are winning. Morale checks for those using the now-powerless weapons suffer a penalty of -2.

Once the *spheres of annihilation* begin moving randomly throughout the Armory, things become dangerous. The *spheres* float randomly with a movement rate of 6. Anyone within 20 feet of one of these objects of destruction must make a saving throw versus death magic. Failure indicates that the *sphere* comes very near the character—another save is needed to avoid the *sphere* if the character engages in other activity other than avoiding it. The DM should make sure that at *least* one *sphere* is present wherever the PCs fight. Otherwise the *spheres* can move with pure randomness, determined solely by a die roll.

Wizards can attempt to control a *sphere* as described in the *DUNGEON MASTER® Guide*. If a wizardly blood attempts this, the *sphere* stops in its path of random destruction (although

plenty more still roam free). Further, an opposing wizard may attempt to wrest control (again, DMs should refer to the *DMG*).

Not surprisingly, once the *spheres* begin to move through the Armory, the structure starts to collapse. About 10 rounds after the *spheres*' release, seemingly random areas in the foundation, ceilings, and walls begin to disintegrate. Each round the DM should roll 1d10 for each character in the PCs' immediate vicinity—including the PCs! A 1 indicates collapsing structure around the character. These characters must make Dexterity checks to avoid 2d6 hp of damage from floors falling out from under them, toppling walls or ceilings, and so on.

Eventually—about 20 rounds after the *spheres* are released—the entire Armory collapses in upon itself due to the weakened structural support. Characters still inside suffer 4d6 points of damage (successful saving throws versus breath weapon indicate half damage).

◆ AFTERMATH ◆

When the smoke clears, the PCs see Blisset crawling out of the rubble. Yorrich Mi sustained a terrible wound, but lives. Killeen Caine was slain by Ely Cromlich—who cannot be found.

The survivors on both sides mill about in a confused and weary stupor. Someday, great tales will tell of this momentous struggle, but for today no songs are sung and no tales told. Today there is only stunned silence.

The Armory lies in ruin. The vast superstructure of metal fretwork, as well as most of the upper stories, has collapsed, and little more than corpse-filled wreckage remains. Most surprisingly, the four surrounding towers have vanished (they existed more on the negative quasiplanes than in Sigil anyway, and the portals which connected them were destroyed); many Sinkers used these portals to flee before they closed the gates behind them. The *spheres of annihilation* have either been brought under control by wizards or lie somewhere within the rubble (alternatingly prompting and deterring would-be looters later on).

In a display of great mercy, Arwyl Swan's Son decrees that all the survivors of the disastrous events are welcome at the not-too-distant Barracks or Prison to seek medical aid and rest. He believes that this battle will bring an end to the conflict.

He is wrong.

All of the attacking forces pull back to the Prison or the Barracks. Some of the Doomguard and their allies, injured and stunned from the dramatic end of the battle, take Arwyl up on his offer of aid. The PCs, if they were wounded (or even if they weren't) should feel welcome to receive the aid no matter which side they fought for.

Some of the more fanatical surviving defenders of the Armory flee into the city—probably out of The Lady's Ward altogether. The secret hidey-holes of various Anarchist cells fill with wounded and hiding warriors. Disorganized and dejected, they don't know what their next move will be.

As the later chapters demonstrate, Ely Cromlich makes that decision for them.

ACT III: THE ESCHATON

All things end. Of that, a body can be as sure as the fact that all things must begin. And, generally speaking, things begin sometime before they end. Now, some basher might come along and spout the screed about the planes having no beginning or ending, about the powers being endless, ad nauseum. "Perhaps," I would tell such a leatherhead, "you're just not looking hard enough. Pry back far enough, and maybe there was a beginning to it all—who're you to know the true dark of it?"

Things that begin always end. A top-shelf blood looks for the signs—they're not hard to find, once you know what to look for—and then uses the end to serve his own needs. See, an ending, even a big ending, is also always a beginning. Beginnings can only be seen by watching for endings. If a body knows that a beginning is coming, he can control it. Those who control the beginning of a thing, control the thing.

—Timeous the Crowclaw

◆ IN BRIEF ◆

A group long hidden within the Cage begins to foment trouble. This sect, which calls itself the Eschaton, anticipates the apocalypse that will bring an end to Sigil (and even the entire multiverse). The members of the sect know that such a time is coming,

for it has been foretold. The Eschaton seeks to bring on and control the end of Sigil so that it can likewise control whatever comes next. Though usually content to wait and watch, the Eschaton may take steps toward escalating the war and achieving its goal.

In the overall scheme of the faction war, however, this whole episode turns out to be a bit of a red herring. Events and clues lead the PCs to believe that the Eschaton has orchestrated the entire conflict to fulfill its prophecies of doom. This, of course, isn't the case.

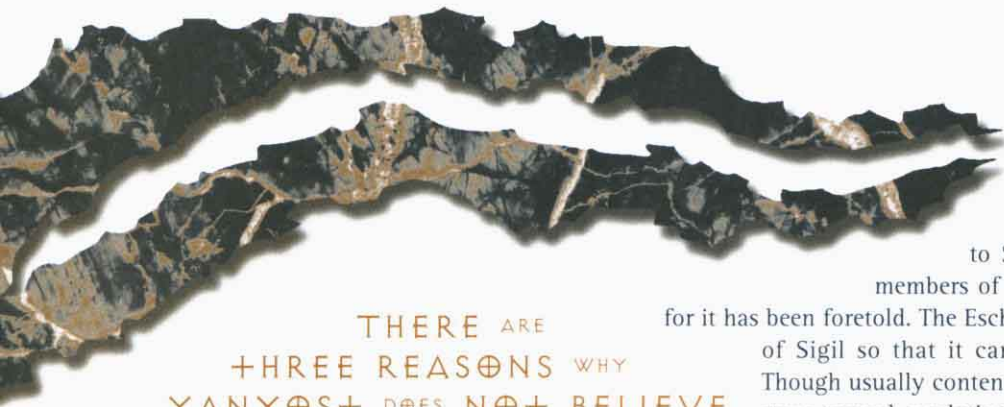
◆ THE CHANT ◆

The destruction of the Armory throws the City of Doors into a state of shock. Now that the first blow has been struck, many fear that the entire city will erupt into total chaos.

The Xaositects, of course, are delighted by that idea and declare their allegiance for the Revolutionary League and the decimated ranks of the Doomguard. The Anarchists revel in the sudden support of a faction they had long coveted as allies (or pawns), while the remaining Sinkers merely grit their teeth and swear revenge and the Sodkillers happily sharpen their blades. The Indeeps, utterly horrified by the attack and convinced that they're next, redouble their pledge of support. A large number of Fated (those with Indep allies, mostly) also take this side.

The Xaositects' declaration prompts the Guvners to swear allegiance to the Harmonium and Sensates, both out of long-standing enmity and the recent murder of Factol Hashkar at a Chaosman's hands. Some Fated who perceive the Hardheads as the "winners" in the Armory battle join up as well (though more join the Indeeps or stay neutral).

The remaining factions stay neutral for the moment. The Sign of One throws in with the Sensates (and thus, the Harmonium) shortly after the adventure opens, despite their occasional dislike of the Hardheads; many Signers resent the Doomguard's and Revolutionary League's attempts to destroy *their* imagined Sigil. The Believers feel



THERE ARE
THREE REASONS WHY
XANXOS DOES NOT BELIEVE
THE END IS NEAR.
FIRST, BECAUSE XANXOS
STILL HAS MANY THINGS TO DO
BEFORE EVERYTHING ENDS,
AND BECAUSE
EVERYTHING IN LIMBO
IS THE SAME AS IT EVER WAS.
NO, WAIT,
EVERYTHING CHANGES THERE.
TWO REASONS.
ONE REASON.
NEVER MIND.
—XANXOS—

much the same way, although it takes them longer to declare allegiances. The Signers' choice prompts the Athar to proclaim their neutrality, given their equal disdain of the Signers and the Doomguard. The Bleakers really don't care enough to stir themselves even to fight against the Harmonium, and the Dustmen have enough to keep them busy just removing the dead from the Armory. The Ciphers mediate between the sides, preventing violence where they can. Finally, the quickly dwindling remnants of the "true" Mercy-killers are too confused by the rapid pace of events to determine who might be guilty of crimes, and content themselves with trying to keep order where the Harmonium has neglected its duties.

TIDINGS OF DOOM

Whaddifie tol' you that the Lady 'erself waddint in control no more? Then you'd balee me when I tell you dat the whole damn stinkin' Cage gonna crumble round us. Balee me, it's gonna happen. You bet' be ready.

—a bubbler commenting on the faction war

When chant regarding the disappearance of the factols began to spread, the Eschaton surfaced. A few cutters had heard of the sect, but for the most part it had faded into the background noise of daily life in the Cage. Until now.

Suddenly, the group and its influence is everywhere. Folks on the street see the doomsayers' banners and hear their speeches, which proclaim a coming ruin the likes of which the multiverse has never seen. This is the absolute end, they say. The true apocalypse—the End Times, Ragnarok, the End of the Last Age, the Death of the Planes, the Eschaton—has come.

To support their claim, the speakers and banners bid their audience to examine the following "facts":



- ◆ The leaders of the Cage, upon whose shoulders rest all belief, have disappeared.
- ◆ The streets of Sigil run red with blood.
- ◆ Not long ago, an evil power long thought dead rose from the dead-book and slew a number of gods and proxies, heralding an age of death and destruction.
- ◆ The Blood War rages at a pace and in a manner unlike ever before.
- ◆ A strange dark force has spread through the planes, bringing misery, gloom, and the death of creativity.
- ◆ The powers themselves are more distant and detached.
- ◆ The forces of Law and Chaos seem to be increasing in power and influence—as if preparing for a final conflict.
- ◆ The “Oldest Barmy in the Gatehouse,” known for his accurate predictions, has prophesied the faction war’s approach and claims it will change Sigil dramatically and permanently.
- ◆ It has been 632 years since the Great Upheaval and 13 years since the First Eschaton (see below). Thirteen is of course the number that harbingers doom (and is the number of the dreaded baatezu). This is coupled with the fact that it is the 130th year of Factol Hashkar’s reign (130 divided by 10 is 13).

The Eschaton whips the people of Sigil into a hysterical frenzy—or at least a fair portion of them. ‘Course, since the burg’s in the middle of a war, that’s not a hard task.

The First Eschaton, the group happily explains if asked, brought about many dark omens presaging the true End. In that time, the Lady appeared on the streets of Sigil 13 times in just 23 days. A great and beloved paladin, Factol Votohm of the Mercykillers, died under mysterious circumstances. Visions and dreams of coming doom spread through the inhabitants of Sigil and even other planes. Mount Olympus shook and strange portents were seen in the skies over many prime worlds.

Now, as foretold, the True Eschaton has come, and the multiverse will come to an end.

◆ THE DARK ◆

The most important thing to remember about the Eschaton is that they really believe what they say. Victims of their own delusions, they see the coming end as inevitable despite the fact that they have predicted this apocalypse for centuries, always believing that it was almost upon them.

The “facts” they use to support their beliefs are suspect at best. Much of it is just so much screed, although they believe it all to be true. This doesn’t make them stupid—just committed. On the planes, a body really can’t condemn a basher just for having strong beliefs.

Because of the current situation, however, the Eschaton garners more attention than ever before. While the sect’s members intended to draw attention to their ideas, now

peery eyes look suspiciously at them. Questions arise. Do these prophets of doom merely forecast the events occurring around them, or do they engineer them?

Obviously, the Eschaton didn’t start the faction war and it wasn’t involved in the disappearance of the factols. But no one knows that dark except Factol Darkwood—and he’s in no position to lann anyone. He’s set powerful forces in motion, but his own predicament has prevented him from controlling them. Now events run their course with a life all their own.

◆ BACKGROUND ◆

The Eschaton has drawn the attention of Cagers individually and in groups. Most of the factions want to know if the sect had any hand in the disappearance of their factols and the conflict that now rages. Further, rumormongers and chant-brokers (like Shemeshka the Marauder, among others) want to know the dark of the group as well. The Eschaton, innocent of much wrongdoing, surprisingly finds itself caught in the middle of powerful forces seeking information—one way or another.

◆ SET UP ◆

After the events of last chapter, it’s likely (but not mandatory) that the PCs have thrown in with one side or the other in the faction war. When the Battle at the Armory ends, three days pass without major events. This time allows the PCs to rest and heal after the battle and learn more of the local chant. The DM is encouraged to engineer encounters which not only inform the cutters about the goings on in the Cage (in regard to the Eschaton and the minor skirmishes) but also bring the events of the war “home” to them. As discussed in the chapter titled How It Begins, the conflict (physical and philosophical) should literally come to their door. NPCs they know become involved and their common haunts become battlefields.

To make things appear less episodic, the DM can actually have the Eschaton come to the attention of the PCs before the beginning of this chapter—even before the beginning of the faction war, if possible. Thus, when their actions become more obvious, the interest in their activities won’t seem so abrupt. (Perhaps inquisitive cutters will even investigate the Eschaton on their own—without prodding from NPC sources.)

After three days of relative peace, a high-up from the side the PCs have aligned with (or any faction high-up of the DM’s choosing—whatever is most appropriate for that specific group of PCs) contacts them via a message carried by an astral streaker. It states:

“My good friends,

“We have appreciated your aid in the past, but now I’m afraid that your help is needed again. In times like these,

every loyal, able-bodied blood must heed the call of duty. If we don't all unite more closely than ever before, everything we've worked for will come crashing down upon our heads.

"I'm sure that like many others, you've seen the antics of this group that calls itself the Eschaton. Its followers proclaim, as they have for ages, that the End Times are here. They claim the disappearance of the factols and the current fighting are signs of their predictions' accuracy.

"We are beginning to wonder if perhaps the Eschaton do more than simply foresee. We think that they might be directly involved in insuring that their doomsaying comes true. If we are correct, the Eschaton represents a most dangerous threat to all of Sigil.

"We humbly beseech you to investigate this group, discover what you can, and report back to us. As always, your help is greatly appreciated and any valuable chant that you bring to us will be rewarded."

◆ LOCALES CONCERNED ◆

The events of this chapter will most likely take the PCs to the following three locations, at least once.

THE CHAPEL PERILOUS

Once a simple, middle-class tenement, this stone building now serves as the headquarters for the Eschaton. It has living quarters for the 37 dedicated, full-time members, as well as offices for the high-ups and rooms that serve as supply storage and workrooms to hand-print pamphlets, construct signs, and train speakers.

Because of all the attention the group has been receiving lately, they've hired a cutter named Toriam Osis to watch over the place and maintain a level of security. She's a no-nonsense minder with no devotion to the Eschaton's beliefs (although she is particularly religious), but she's more than willing to give her all to an honest employer.

The Eschaton, it should be made clear, takes no steps to bring about anyone's end—the doomsayers haven't the might even if they wanted to. Right now, their simple plans consist of proclaiming the coming apocalypse, awaiting it with as many believers as they can convert, and rising from the ashes to become the new masters of whatever's left in the New Beginning (as they call it).

The current leaders of the Eschaton include Anton Rennes (Pl/♂ human/T8/Eschaton/N), Sheawil the Lesser (Pr/♀ elf/M6/Eschaton/CN), and Eris Montauk (Pl/♀ tiefling/F7/Eschaton/N). During the day, if they aren't "working" the streets they're found at the Chapel Perilous. These three often spend their nights in the safety and anonymity of Rechvad's Persona Lavisicum (see below). They're peery for their safety due to the increased attention the group has garnered—as well as from a little honest paranoia that comes with their preoccupation with the destruction of everything.

TORIAM OSIS (Pl/♀ HALF-ELF/F9/BELIEVERS OF THE SOURCE/LN): AC -1 (chain mail +2, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 75; THACO 12 (10 with long sword and 12 with short sword in off hand, or 9 with short bow); #AT 5/2; Dmg 1d8+2 (long sword +1, Str bonus) and 1d6+1 (short sword, Str bonus) or 1d6 (short bow); SD +2 to reaction adjustments from planars; SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (17); XP 2,000.

Notes: Toriam, a sword-arm for hire, uses a long sword and short sword two-weapon combination which lets her attack with a whirlwind of blades. It takes a great deal to win her trust, but she's fiercely loyal to those who employ and don't cheat her.

S 17, D 18, C 16, I 15, W 12, Ch 12.

Special Equipment: chain mail +2, long sword +1 (both Sigil-forged), boots of levitation, potion of extra-healing.

RECHVAD'S PERSONA LAVISICUM

At least 60 years ago, a half-elf Anarchist mage named Rechvad created a magical process that could transform an individual's personality into someone else's. He hoped that this method would help Revolutionary League members infiltrate and subvert the other factions. Unfortunately, the process, while effective, had an unpredictable duration. The Anarchists rejected Rechvad and his magical process and he left the faction altogether.

Soon afterward, the mage created what he called a "lavisicum," where—for a price—folks could have their personalities altered in any way they chose. Rechvad saw moderate financial success in this as various well-to-do Cagers took to the idea of changing their personalities like others might change their clothes.

No longer a member of the Revolutionary League, Rechvad now belongs to the Eschaton. Rather than joining them on the streets to spread the word, however, he helps maintain a safe house for their top-shelf ringleaders. They come to the lavisicum most nights to privately discuss their philosophy and their business. Their use of this spot as a refuge has little to do with Rechvad's process, but much to do with his sympathies for their cause.

Rechvad's Persona Lavisicum is located in the Guildhall Ward on Newt Street. The long, narrow structure boasts two stories—the upper level serving as Rechvad's home, the lower as the lavisicum.

The lavisicum consists of an open front business area, a treatment area, a workroom, and a storage room in the back. Rechvad's simple home has a kitchen/dining area, a bedroom, a privy, and an unused room (where the Eschaton high-ups sleep when they come here at night).

Rechvad's personality-altering process is actually very simple. He administers a mild electrical shock (created by a small magical generator that he invented for the process) to the temples of the subject to prepare him, and then mixes a specific concoction tailored to the desired personality.

Personality choices can include the following traits:

kind, generous, open, flamboyant, uninhibited, secretive, selfish, conservative, suspicious, confident, or virtually anything else that a customer wants. The effects last anywhere from 3 to 18 hours—a range that varied too much for the Anarchists to deem it very useful in helping them impersonate and infiltrate their targets. The personality changes occur without any conscious effort on the part of the subject. If a body selects “cheerful” as his artificial trait, he’ll act like a cheerful cutter without even trying, no matter what he’s really like. This change isn’t overpowering—he won’t be cheerful as he’s being tortured, for example—but it’s realistic. Folks like to use this process to temporarily improve their interpersonal skills, prepare for an upcoming event, or just for a lark.

Other than a normal door lock, Rechvad possesses no special security measures—except of course for his dog, Hector. A body’s not likely to recognize the breed of this completely harmless animal, because no one’s ever seen another like him. Rather than barking, this scrawny, ugly dog produces dabuslike rebuses above his head for noises like “ruff,” “bark,” “yip,” and “howl.” Despite this odd quality, Hector possesses only normal animal intelligence and instincts—those of laziness and cowardliness, of course.

RECHVAD (Pl/♂ HUMAN/M4/ESCHATON/N): AC 10; MV 12; hp 12; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SZ M (5’8’ tall); ML average (9); XP 270.

Notes: Middle-aged and portly, Rechvad was once a schemer, but he now tries to live life in a more straightforward, forthright manner. He sincerely believes in the philosophy of the Eschaton and that the multiverse will soon end (starting with Sigil). He’s no longer an activist, but he helps in whatever ways he can.

S 9, D 12, C 10, I 17, W 11, Ch 14.

Special Equipment: wand of illusion (12 charges).

Spells (3,2): 1st—identify, read magic, shield; 2nd—invisibility, know alignment.

DARK HOUSE

Also known as the Dark House of Divination, this building stands discreetly near the Great Gymnasium in the Guildhall Ward. Thuemos Diaret, a woman nearly as unobtrusive as her place of business, operates this fortune-telling establishment. Thuemos does not profess to know the future, however. Instead, she offers bits of advice and tiny snatches of chant regarding hidden events in both the present and the past. Folks come to her for her insight and knowledge, which seem almost mystical. Others claim that nothing about her powers reflects the supernatural, saying she’s nothing but a chant-broker at best, a screed at worst.

Thuemos is actually all this and a little more. A cleric devoted to all gods of knowledge and secrets, she does have a little mystical access to otherwise-unknowable knowledge. Most of her information, however, comes from her master, the arcanaloth known as Shemeshka the Marauder. She also

gains the chant from various contacts—whether they’re willing or not.

Thuemos doesn’t look like much. She dresses simply and her plain features hide her devious mind. Walking down the streets of the Cage, she looks like a shopkeeper on her way home from the Market. This façade belies her insidiously evil, cruel, and selfish nature. She manipulates, threatens, and tortures information out of folks and then uses the chant for her own gain. She has no compassion, no conscience, and no compunction against killing—a perfect servant for Shemeshka.

The layout of Dark House consists of the following areas.

ENTRY. A permanent *wyvern watch* here alerts Thuemos to intruders. A secret room allows a lookout to watch as bashers come up the walk toward the house.

PARLOR. Thuemos uses this room to meet with clients. The room’s walls sport black and red splashes of color and strange sculpture on the shelves. The decor is meant to unnerve and unsettle those who come to Dark House (and it usually works). A table constructed with a bowllike depression in its center stands in the center of the room, along with a single chair. Thuemos either puts water for scrying or the blood and entrails of a small sacrificed animal—the latter usually just for the effect—in the bowl.

CHAPEL. This room is dedicated to all powers that watch over secrets and conceal forbidden knowledge. Thuemos uses the chapel to pay homage to and commune with her patrons. Many gods of dark secrets enjoy blood sacrifice, and this room obviously has been used for such activities. Bloodstains mar a small altar with a silver-plated top. A silver bowl and knife lie atop the altar. Diaphanous curtains and drapes hang throughout the room, giving the place a cloudy, shadowy quality no matter where a body stands.

The chapel holds a position of importance not only for its religious function, but because it also serves as Thuemos’ library. She keeps a number of books in a case on the wall opposite the altar. The subjects vary considerably, but all are valuable and informative. A few are handwritten by Thuemos herself, and these contain knowledge about the Sigil spell, the prophetic barmy in the Gatehouse (Gifad), and Alluvius Ruskin—someone who Thuemos absolutely despises. To keep prying eyes out of her collection, however, she keeps three important-looking but blank books with *sepia snake sigils* within them in the case.

THUEMOS’ QUARTERS. The mistress of Dark House calls kip here. She lives rather simply and keeps no valuables.

KNIGHTS’ QUARTERS. Essentially a barracks, this room houses 10 soldiers employed by Thuemos for protection and whatever errands that she might dispatch them upon.

STORAGE. Little of interest waits in these crates and barrels.

KITCHEN/LARDER. Simple and usually ill-kept, this area holds nothing save a rat or two scavenging among the crumbs.

BACK ROOM. Thuemos uses the back room for "information extraction" from those less than willing to give it freely. She uses torture, coercion, extortion, magic, and lies to obtain the information that she desires.

This room contains six chairs fitted with metal clamps for holding prisoners. (A bend bars/lift gates roll is required to burst these bonds, and they keep spellcasters from using spells with somatic components.) These horrific (but non-magical) chairs were designed by the kocrachon baatezu. The seats possess hidden blades and spikes activated by voice only, which can spring out to stab or cut the victim trapped within the chair. Each blade inflicts 1 hp of damage, and Thuemos often coats some of them with truth poison (a victim must successfully save versus poison or answer all questions truthfully for 1d6 rounds).

Other more "mundane" torture implements hang on hooks on the walls. The walls of the room and the six chairs carry an enchantment that gives them 30% Magic Resistance.

THUEMOS DIARET (Pl/♀ HUMAN/C10/FATED/NE): AC 6 (belt, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 39; THACO 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SA poison; SZ M (5'3" tall); ML average (9); XP 3,000.

SA—dagger is coated with Type C poison, which has an onset time of 1d4+1 minutes and causes 25 points of damage (or 2d4 with a successful saving throw).

S 11, D 16, C 9, I 15, W 16, Ch 8.

Special Equipment: belt of protection +2 (functions as a cloak of protection created in Sigil).

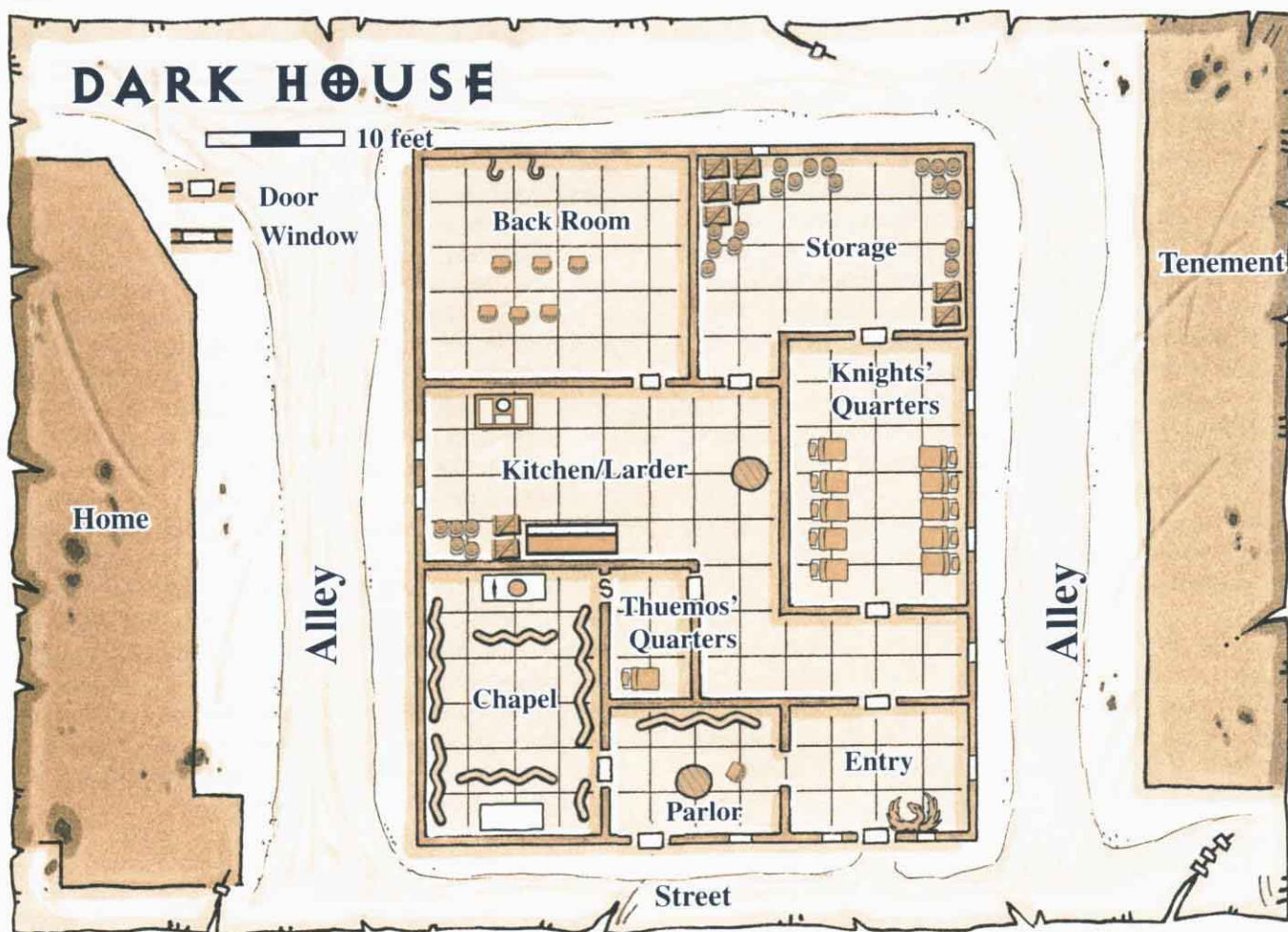
Spells (6,6,3,3,2): 1st—*bless, command, cure light wounds, detect magic, detect poison, sanctuary*; 2nd—*augury, charm person or mammal, enthrall, hold person, know alignment, messenger*; 3rd—*cause paralysis, dispel magic, speak with dead*; 4th—*detect lie, divination, reflecting pool*; 5th—*commune, cure critical wounds*.

KNIGHTS OF DARK HOUSE (Pl/♂ or ♀ HUMAN/F4/NE) (1D12 OR 2 PER PC): AC 1 (full plate armor); MV 9; hp 26 each; THACO 17 (16 with sword); #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 (two-handed swords) or 1d4 (crossbow); SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (16); Int average (9); XP 175.

Notes: The Knights of Dark House wear heavy black armor covered in blades and spikes and long, flowing black capes. These overly dramatic warriors enjoy intimidating and terrorizing foes as much as fighting.

◆ THE FLOW OF EVENTS ◆

The PCs set out one way or another to gather chant (and hopefully the dark) on the Eschaton. The doomsayers don't appreciate a lot of bashers poking around them while they



attempt to spread their message; interest in their ideas is welcome, but too much curiosity about the Eschaton itself is not. If the PCs aren't careful, the encounter might turn violent—the Eschaton's followers can be volatile due to their frenzied nature and the current circumstances.

Investigating PCs find little at the Chapel Perilous. As long as they ask questions about the group's philosophy, the members remain more than willing to talk. If the conversation drifts to virtually any other topic, the PCs learn little. It should become obvious, however, that if someone's plotting a war among the factions, it's probably not being done from a run-down tenement filled with little beyond slogan-covered signs, opinionated tracts, and the proselytizing bashers who make them.

Toriam Osis may prove to be a particular obstacle for the PCs if they poke around the Chapel Perilous too much. She's distrustful of anyone who asks many questions, and won't hesitate to oust those she deems to be "troublemakers." Toriam's a canny blood, peerily watching over her charges.

PCs may tumble to the identities of some of the leaders of the group and follow them, or they may just watch the place discreetly for a while. Eventually, if they're careful and observant, they can trace the Eschaton's leaders to Rechvad's Persona Lavisicum.

Unfortunately, the PCs aren't the only ones who've tumbled to the location of the safe house. Thuemos Diaret has also learned, through Shemeshka, that Rechvad harbors the leaders. She seeks to learn more about the Eschaton, and sends the Knights of Dark House to bring the high-ups from Rechvad's to her lair.

Depending on what the PCs do, they might be captured by the Knights of Dark House along with the Eschaton leaders. To accomplish the capture, the knights use magical items called *sleep stones*. These fragile crystals, if broken against a victim's skin, cause anyone they touch to fall into a deep sleep for 10d6 rounds. No saving throw is allowed against these potent, one-use items, but Magic Resistance does apply. Each knight takes one *sleep stone* if assigned to bring back prisoners for their mistress (they don't carry them around while guarding Dark House).

Captured sods wake in the chairs in the back room of Dark House. Thuemos interrogates her prisoners regarding the Eschaton and the causes of the faction war. Interrupting this unpleasantness, however, is a messenger from Shemeshka—a fire mephit that bursts into the room. The mephit relays the following message to Thuemos, regardless of whoever else might be present:

"Shemeshka the Wise wishes me to speak these words to Thuemos Diaret: Knowledge of the Sigil spell lies in the place known as Nowhere. Your friend Allurius Ruskin now holds the gem but experiences trouble utilizing it. Shemeshka demands more information regarding these topics—and soon."

This knowledge is helpful to PCs and may lead them into Act V. First, however, they have to escape the clutches of Thuemos.

If not captured, the PCs might trace the Knights and the captured Eschaton leaders back to Dark House. In this case they have a greater chance of gaining information by breaking in and exploring, intercepting the mephit messenger, or directly confronting Thuemos herself.

THE INTRODUCTION OF A LITTLE CHAOS

Tav Nimminar embodies a walking, talking variable who can be thrown into any situation to make it more complicated. Tav belongs to a group of Xaositects who call themselves the Distention of Law. These bashers feel that the best way to create more chaos is to make more laws—more complex laws. Taken to its ultimate extreme, this belief holds that if laws become so restrictive that they cannot be obeyed, the amount of chaos and lawbreaking in the system increases by a limitless amount. Tav, however, isn't that much of an extremist (if he was, some Guvner or Hardhead would've scragged him long ago). Instead, Tav likes to "play with folks' minds a bit." If Tav finds a sign announcing a law, he'll alter it slightly, making the rule it declares a little more strict—often in a somewhat odd way.

For example, Tav might hang around the City Barracks in disguise and spread the chant (often in the form of forged official memos) to Hardheads going out on patrol that some law has been changed, like the number of bashers who can walk abreast in a given thoroughfare, or the amount of weight a pack animal is allowed to carry, or even the allowed colors of a traveler's hat. The escalation of needless restrictions, Tav believes, increases the likelihood that folks'll rebel against the rule—and rules in general.

Tav Nimminar throws the whole adventure in a barmy direction when he also begins to investigate the Eschaton. He starts his inquiry by informing the local people around the Chapel Perilous (not the authorities, just the citizens) that "They've" just passed legislation against predicting the future. (He always simply says "They" and never gives specifics about the lawgivers or enforcers, leaving his listener's own paranoia to fill in the appropriate enemy.) The Harmonium army that destroyed the Armory, he warns, will soon descend upon the Eschaton's headquarters. This chant spreads through the entire Guildhall Ward with great expediency. When Thuemos hears this, she finds herself a little worried about herself and Dark House's divination business as well. She alerts her knights to be prepared for an attack. While this probably isn't a good turn of events as far as the PCs' plans go, it does offer a chance for them to bluff their way out of a delicate situation. Canny cutters might play off of Thuemos' fears regarding this news and give her a story of how the authorities are on their way or somesuch.

Tav waits for the news to reach the Eschaton and observes (by simply hanging about) what effect the rumor has upon the group. His method of investigation is unusual, but it has an unlikely effect in this case: Instead of hiding, the doomsayers work harder and faster toward their goal. They've now got an even shorter deadline to spread the word

than they thought. Being paranoid already, though, they don't go into a panic—they expect things like this to happen in the “end times.”

When Tav notices the PCs also investigating the Eschaton he approaches them and offers to help, making up a story about being a mercenary spy working for secret masters interested in the Eschaton (but of no threat to the heroes, of course). He wants to see what the PCs have learned and honestly believes that by working together (sort of), they can each accomplish more. The PCs probably won't like, let alone understand Tav's methods. Nevertheless, he is a particularly sneaky and capable knight of the post, dedicated to the cause of chaos and well able to improvise plans on a moment's notice.

If the PCs refuse his offer, Tav follows them anyway. He might even spread a little of his brand of chaos in their direction by dispersing more screed among the Eschaton that their own leaders have ordered them to work twice as hard now that the apocalypse draws ever closer. With this, the members of the group grow either discontented or overworked, and those observing them grow more suspicious as their activities continue to escalate.

TAV NIMMINAR (PL/♂ HUMAN/T8/XAOSITECTS/CN): AC 5 (leather armor +2, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 40; THACO 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SA *babble*, *nondetection*, ×3 backstab; SZ M (5'4" tall); ML fanatic (18); XP 2,000.

SD—confuse all verbal communication within 30' with *babble* (reverse of *tongues*, 1/week); permanent *nondetection* from spells cast by lawful wizards or priests.

S 10, D 15, C 15, I 18, W 8, Ch 13.

Special Equipment: leather armor +2 (Sigil made), bag of tricks.

Thief Skills: PP 65, OL 62, F/RT 60, MS 70, HS 56, HN 25, CW 93, RL 30.

◆ THE END, BUT NOT THE END ◆

Eventually, the PCs tumble to the fact that the Eschaton really has nothing to do with the faction war. They've also probably discovered Tav's strange activities and helped, hindered, or ignored him. Hopefully, they've also heard the message sent to Thueumos from Shemeshka—it holds important information for the next portions of the adventure.

Unless things get radically out of control, the Eschaton's predictions of doom are, for the moment, incorrect. No matter what happens, however, the group doesn't go away. They simply fall back into the shadows to wait and watch, convinced that The End is nigh...

Eventually.



ACT IV: DARKSTORM

What I find myself saying over and over is "as if things weren't bad enough."

We needed the fiends to poke their talons into this whole mess like we need another sewer back-up in the Hive. I can't imagine how they knew to come right then, but they caught us at our weakest moment. I suppose that's the nature of fiends—they've a knack for that sort of thing. If it hadn't been for—

Well, I suppose you need to hear the whole story before you hear the end....

—Tarsheva Longreach

◆ IN BRIEF ◆

Just as Sigil's war fever reaches its boiling point, a yugoloth schemer forces a Blood War battle to spill into Sigil. He intends to further destabilize the city's situation so that his allies have time to

organize a yugoloth invasion force large enough to conquer the Cage. In the end, powerful bashers take the fight to the fiends as they descend into the realms below the streets to fight the 'loths in their own secret stronghold—and learn a valuable secret.

◆ THE CHANT ◆

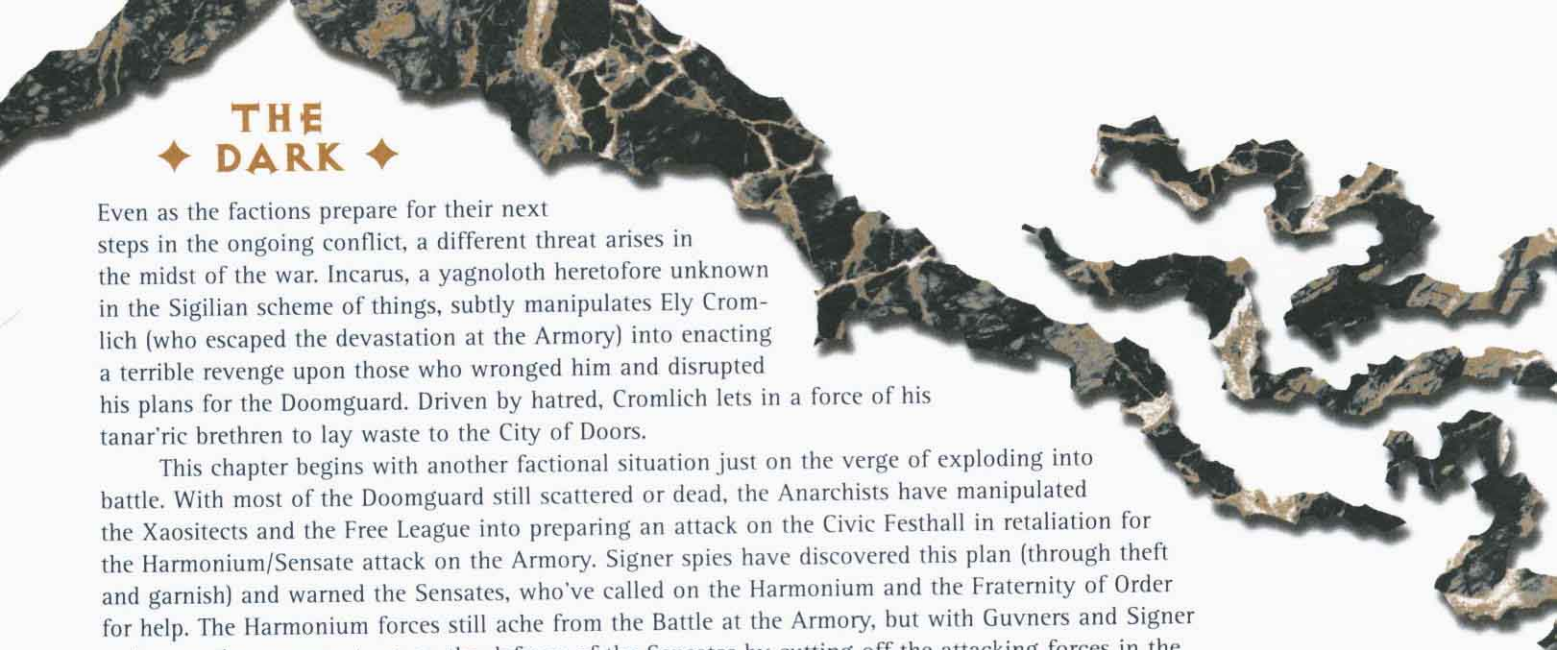
The mood in Sigil is mixed. In the few days since the Battle at the Armory, things have been relatively quiet, at least by Cager standards. No one knows for sure if the bulk of the conflict is over, or if it's just begun. As usually happens in Sigil, events are about to take an unexpected twist.

The PCs hear the following chant on the streets:

WHA+'S WØRSE,
A DØUR BAA+EZU
ØR AN
ØP+IMIS+IC +ANAR'RI?

NEI+HER.
AN INNØCEN+-LØØKING
YUGØLØ+H
IS WØRS+ ØF ALL.
—PLANAR "JØKE"
+HA+ FEW DARE
LAUGH A+

- ◆ "Well, it looks like things are over."
- ◆ "The Battle at the Armory was bad, but I guess it had to happen. At least it's over."
- ◆ "Over? The war's just starting! Things won't end until the streets run red with blood and all the factions have fallen!"
- ◆ "I say the whole damn city might not even survive!"
- ◆ "I just feel like something even worse is going to happen."
- ◆ "I've been having ominous dreams. Dreams about fiends."



◆ THE DARK ◆

Even as the factions prepare for their next steps in the ongoing conflict, a different threat arises in the midst of the war. Incarus, a yagnoloth heretofore unknown in the Sigilian scheme of things, subtly manipulates Ely Cromlich (who escaped the devastation at the Armory) into enacting a terrible revenge upon those who wronged him and disrupted his plans for the Doomguard. Driven by hatred, Cromlich lets in a force of his tanar'ric brethren to lay waste to the City of Doors.

This chapter begins with another factional situation just on the verge of exploding into battle. With most of the Doomguard still scattered or dead, the Anarchists have manipulated the Xaositects and the Free League into preparing an attack on the Civic Festhall in retaliation for the Harmonium/Sensate attack on the Armory. Signer spies have discovered this plan (through theft and garnish) and warned the Sensates, who've called on the Harmonium and the Fraternity of Order for help. The Harmonium forces still ache from the Battle at the Armory, but with Guvners and Signer assistance they prepare to go to the defense of the Sensates by cutting off the attacking forces in the Lower Ward before they ever reach the Festhall.

As the forces gather in the narrow streets of the Lower Ward, Ely Cromlich's plans for retribution begin. Fiends begin to pour into the Cage.

◆ BACKGROUND ◆

The Abyss roils with nervous tension. While that's not an entirely new phenomenon, this particular bout of turmoil has been spurred by recent events. Chant among the chaotic fiends is that Orcus, one of their own long-thought dead, returned from the dead-book. The former Abyssal lord (who had actually ascended to godhood well before his demise) never held much favor or respect among his fellows. Upon hearing the news of his resurrection, the gibbering bone-boxes of the bottomless pit begin to rattle with speculation.

A few tanar'ri high-ups felt that Orcus' return would spell their doom. The Lord of the Undead's new outlook seemed to be geared toward vengeance, and chant had it that he even killed a few powers in his quest for revenge against former enemies. Abyssal lords like Graz'zt and even powers such as Demogorgon fought with Orcus throughout his existence, and the rumors of his return had them watching their backs more closely than ever. Kiaransalee, the drow goddess who actually slew Orcus, apparently went completely barmy upon hearing the news. The borders of her realm, Thanatos, barred all traffic. No one even dares speculate what strange defenses and dire preparations the inhabitants prepared within that dread place.

Most tanar'ri, however, believed that the undead power would join them in their war against the baatezu. Conveniently forgetting that Orcus never paid much attention to the conflict, they presumed that their ultimate victory in the Blood War was at hand. The strife increased to a fever pitch (even for the Blood War), even as the Abyss vomited forth tanar'ri hordes as it had only rarely done before.

Orcus himself, if he still lives (for chant has it that he was put back in the dead-book), has taken no steps to prove either side correct in their assessments and speculations. All that is known for sure is that he's nowhere to be found—living or floating lifeless on the Astral.

The baatezu find themselves surprised and hard-pressed in the light of these newly redoubled attacks by their eternal foes. Within dark towers, they scheme and plot new strategies to cope with the nearly limitless tanar'ri numbers and their newfound zeal.

With all this renewed activity on the Lower Planes, most of the fiendish spies that normally keep a peery eye toward the Cage aren't watching Sigilian affairs right now. "Never let your gaze fall from Sigil, not for a moment," a planar chant-broker once said, and truer words were never spoken. The faction war begins without so much as a raised eyebrow among the baatezu or tanar'ri.

But the yugoloths see all.

In anticipation of just such an occasion, the neutral evil fiends secreted a deep, dark lair in UnderSigil where Incarus, a scheming yagnoloth, watches over and occasionally even manipulates events in Sigil.



As the events of the faction war begin to unfold, Incarus quickly formulates a plan. When the war renders the Cage's inhabitants their most unprepared, he'll call a yugoloth army into the

city and take it by force. Finally, Sigil will be in the hands of the bloods that really deserve to control it.

However, no yugoloth army stands ready for such an invasion, and Incarus is loath to ask for aid from any other 'loth high-up. (Such high-ups might in fact not agree to the plan anyway, for fear of such an overt action—and in the presence of such an unknown quantity as the Lady, no less!) To buy time to consolidate his Gehennan forces, Incarus contacts Ely Cromlich by way of the Nightmare Shaft, a powerful artifact in the Temple of Darkness deep beneath the unsuspecting Sigilian streets. Through Incarus' manipulation, Cromlich agrees to bring Shediv Toothlock, a babau ally of his, and a Blood War brigade through a portal and into the Cage to enact revenge.

Meanwhile, Incarus sends word to Nidaan, a cornugon baatezu leading troops in sorties on the Gray Waste, that a force of tanar'ri is headed for Sigil in hopes of gaining a permanent base to use against the baatezu. Using a portal key provided by Incarus, Nidaan leads his forces into the Lower Ward as well, where the yagnoloth hopes the feuding fiends will occupy and weaken the Cager forces (and each other) until his newly mustered yugoloth army can arrive.

◆ SE+ UP ◆

If the PCs stand among those who survived the Battle at the Armory (Act II), the events in that chapter can lead directly into this one.

After a few days of rest, the PCs are contacted by whichever factioneer had recruited them before (either Blisset or Yorrich Mi). Blisset tells the PCs that they're needed again, because all the "poor victims of the merciless attack on the Armory" now have a chance to avenge themselves in an attack on the Civic Festhall. Yorrich Mi appeals to the PCs' sense of compassion at the plight of the poor Sensates—who face opposition from "all sides"—and the defenseless nature of the Festhall (not entirely true, but that's a matter of opinion).

'Course, the PCs might not need to be "recruited." They may be involved more intimately with the plans of one side or the other—either as important members of an involved

faction or by way of their actions at the Battle at the Armory. As the day of the attack dawns, the Harmonium/Guvner/Sensate forces set up a defensive wall to prevent the Xaositects and the Indeps from reaching the Civic Festhall. Their opponents move straight through the streets and head toward a direct assault.

If not brought back into the fighting by factional concerns, the DM can simply maneuver the PCs into the Lower Ward and have them inadvertently be caught up in events. In actuality, all the PCs really needs to do at the beginning of the adventure is to be in the right area when the fiends arrive.

◆ TAVRA+ CHOL MOC ◆

The Lower Ward, so named for the numerous gates to the Lower Planes, unfortunately (but unsurprisingly) hosts the arrival of the fiendish invasion of the Cage. The fiends appear in and around a tannery called Tavrat Chol Moc, right in the middle of the imminent battle.

A simple sign proclaiming the tannery's name hangs over the door of this large and noisy place found—appropriately—on Tanner's Lane in the Lower Ward. Although the sign does not necessarily suggest the nature of the place, the unmistakable smell proves the establishment's purpose.

Tavrat Chol Moc is named after its proprietor, an ancient, dark-skinned dwarf from a backwater prime world. Tavrat employs 13 workers in the tannery who cut, boil, and treat leather in a variety of ways. The tannery smells worse than a slaad's belch and feels hotter than the back of a salamander's neck. The stench comes from the vats of foul acidic mash used to treat leather, encrusted with the fermentation of decades. The heat emanates from boiling water and oil used to soften and cure the material. Hooks and harsh iron racks are everywhere, used to stretch, puncture, and size the leather. In short, the tannery looks, feels, and smells like a little slice of the Nether Realms already, even without an open portal to the Lower Planes.

The gate waits in a space located in the rafters of the building, where wooden catwalks stretch over the vats and workers use hooked iron poles to handle the leather. It leads directly into the Abyss' 340th layer—ironically, a cold, desolate, voidlike place, nothing like the hellish environment of Tavrat Chol Moc.

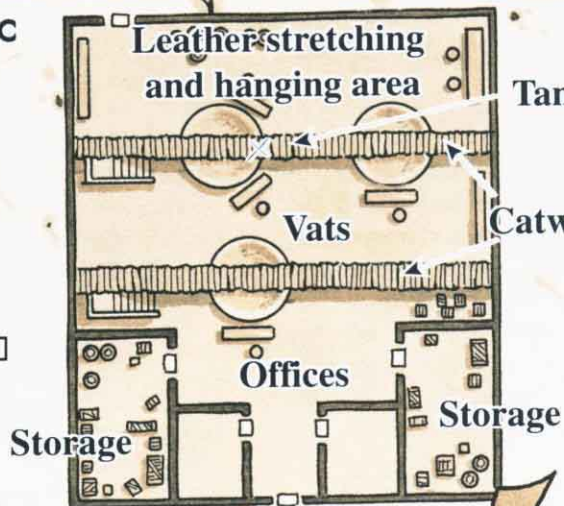
Outside, around the back of the place, a body can find mounds of waste material—ruined leather scraps, mostly. A pile of discarded metal and wrecked iron tools creates a bounded space amid the refuse that serves as a portal leading to the first gloom of the Gray Waste.

TAVRAT CHOL MOC (Pr/♂ DWARF/F4/BELIEVERS OF THE SOURCE/N): AC 8 (leather armor); MV 12; hp 29; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); SD +2 reaction adjustment from planars; SZ S (4'8" tall); ML steady (12); XP 120.

S 11, D 9, C 15, I 11, W 15, Ch 7.

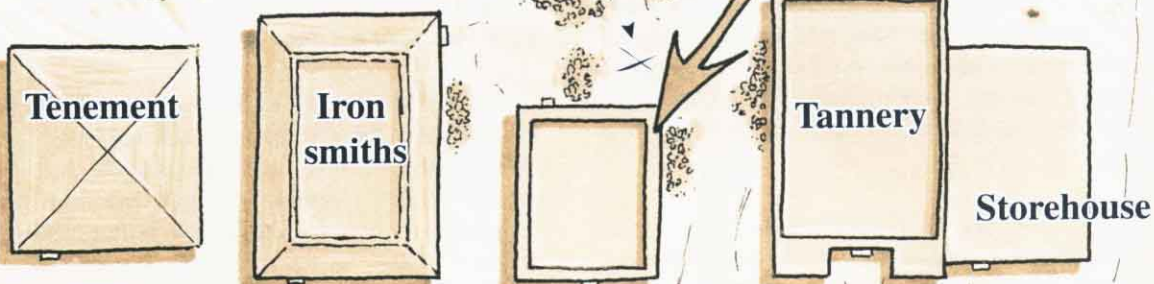
TAVRAT CHOL MOC AND SURROUNDING AREA

20 feet

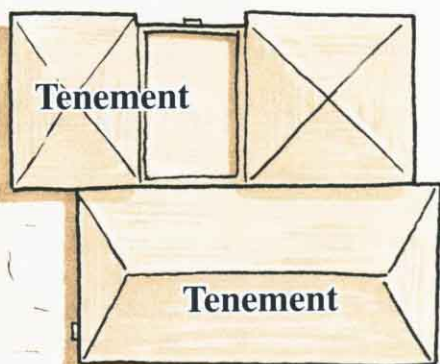
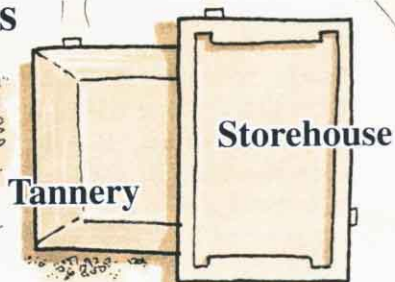


Tavrat Chol Moc

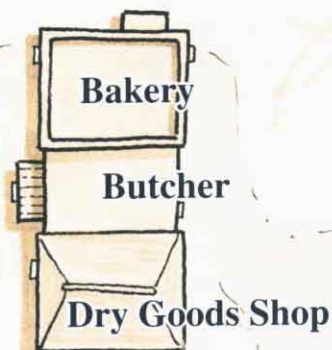
Baatezu portal



Harmonium
Forces



Xaositects
and
Indeps



◆ DRAMA+IS PERSONAE ◆

THE FAC+ION WARRIORS

Use the statistics given for the various warriors in Act II. The Harmonium/Guvner/Sensate alliance numbers about 300 and is led by Tonat Shar. The Xaositect/Indep forces consist of twice that many warriors, but they possess little in the way of training and less discipline. Most importantly, however, they have no real leader—they're more of a mob than an army. Their plans consist of nothing more specific than going to the Festhall and tearing it down. (Of course, that was the only way to get the Xaositects on board.)

TANAR'RI

This advance team of tanar'ri works well together, despite the fact that they're, well, tanar'ri. Shediv Toothlock, a babau, leads this pack in lieu of an armanite pathwarden. All tanar'ri can cast *darkness*, *15-foot radius* and *infravision* at will and unless otherwise noted have the following resistances: they suffer half damage from cold, magical fire, and gas and are immune to electricity, normal fire, and poison. Normally tanar'ri can *gate* more of their kind, but since this ability cannot bring in fiends from outside of the Cage, it is not listed here.

ARMANITES (30): AC 2; MV 18, Fl 18 (C); HD 5; hp 25 each; THACO 15; #AT 3; Dmg 2d6/2d6 (hoof/hoof) and 1d10 (halberd) or 1d6+2 (composite bow and barbed arrows); SA arrows, hooves; SD +2 or better weapon to hit; SW suffer 3d6 hp damage from holy water (1d6 from splashes); SZ L (10' tall); ML champion (15); Int average (8–10); AL CE; XP 2,000.

SA—arrows can become *spark bolts* inflicting 2d8 electrical damage (save for half); hooves crush shields (75% chance) or armor (25%) on a roll of 20 which reduces AC by 1.

GORISTRO (1): AC -2; MV 15; HD 20; hp 200; THACO 1; #AT 2; Dmg 6d4+6/6d4+6 (fist/fist); SA boulders, stamp attack; SD +6 hp per die, +1 or better weapon to hit, regenerate 1 hp per turn, immunities; MR 60%; SZ H (22' tall); ML champion (16); Int low (5); AL CE; XP 23,000.

SA—hurl boulders 240 yards for 2d12 hp damage; each round an additional stamping attack can be made against a foe 6 feet tall or shorter for 5d8 hp damage.

SD—immune to cold, magical fire, and gas, half damage from silver weapons.

SHEDIV TOOTHLOCK, BABAU: AC -3; MV 15; HD 8+14; hp 51; THACO 13; #AT 1 or 3; Dmg 1d4+1/1d4+1/2d4 (claw/claw/horn) or 1d10+7 (two-handed sword, Str bonus); SA gaze, spells, backstab×4; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, immunities, corrosion; MR 50%; SZ M (7' tall); ML champion (16); Int genius (17); AL CE; XP 17,000.

SA—Gaze functions as *ray of enfeeblement* up to 20 feet; casts *dispel magic*, *fear*, *fly*, *heat metal*, *levitate*, and *polymorph self*.

SD—half damage from slashing, piercing, or silver weapons; 20% chance to corrode any metal weapon that successfully hits him (magical weapons lose one “plus” if saving throw is failed); flesh that touches him suffers 1d6 hp damage.

Thief Skills: PP 30, OL 30, F/RT 25, MS 95, HS 80, DN 35, CW 90, RL 30.

BAA+EZU

Like all baatezu, these warriors possess superb training and discipline. Nidaan, the cornugon leader, utilizes precise strategy to overcome his tanar'ri foes and their disorderly ways. All baatezu can cast *advanced illusion*, *animate dead*, *charm person*, *know alignment*, *suggestion*, and *infravision* at will and unless otherwise noted have the following resistances: they suffer half damage from cold and gas and are immune to fire and poison. Normally baatezu can *gate* more of their kind, but since this ability cannot bring in fiends from outside of the Cage, it is not listed here.

BLACK ABISHAI (50): AC 5; MV 9, Fl 12 (C); HD 4+1; hp 20 each; THACO 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d4+1 (claw/claw/tail); SA poison, dive, spell-like abilities; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, regenerates 1 hp/round from wounds not inflicted by holy water or item; SW suffers 2d4 hp from holy water; MR 30%; SZ L (8' tall); ML average (10); Int average (8–10); AL LE; XP 7,000.

SA—tail is poisoned (save or die); if attacking from above in a dive, gains +2 to attack and inflicts double damage; casts *change self*, *command*, *produce flame*, *pyrotechnics*, and *scare*.

NIDAAN, CORNUGON: AC -2; MV 9, Fl 18 (C); HD 10; hp 58; THACO 11; #AT 4 or 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d4+1/1d3 (claw/claw/bite/tail) or 1d3 and 1d6+6 (barbed whip, Str bonus); SA tail, whip, *fear*, spell-like abilities; SD +2 or better weapon to hit, regenerates 2 hp/round, half damage from silver weapons; MR 50%; SZ L (9' tall); ML elite (14); Int exceptional (16); AL LE; XP 10,000.

SA—tail creates a wound that bleeds 1 hp per round until treated; whip stuns for 1d4 rounds unless saving throw vs. paralyzation is successful; radiates *fear* in a 5' radius; casts *detect magic*, *ESP*, *lightning bolt* (3/day), *produce flame*, *pyrotechnics*, and *wall of fire* (1/day).

◆ THE FLOW OF EVENTS ◆

In short, the fiends come to Sigil. The whole goal of the DM in this portion of the adventure should simply be to make sure the PCs are in the Lower Ward when they arrive. Events will take on a life of their own after that.

The PCs' reactions may depend on where they stand when the portals open. If the PCs fight alongside the Har-

monium, Guvners, and Sensates, they've probably spent their morning preparing to block and defend the streets of the Lower Ward as their foes approach. They'll watch as their enemies make their way toward them down Tannery Way when the tanar'ri pour out of Tavrat Chol Moc.

If the PCs march with the Xaositect and Free League forces, they've just arrived on the scene when the chaotic mass of fiends issues forth from the tannery. Seizing upon this opportunity, many of the unpredictable Xaositects leap into the fray—on the side of the tanar'ri. The Indeps fall back, looking for leadership. (On the whole, they'd like to help the endangered people of the ward, but it looks hopeless at the outset.)

If the PCs don't plan to take part in the coming battle but are merely nearby, they see the fiends appear from where they stand. Self-preservation should bring them into the action as tanar'ri and/or baatezu attack them.

FIENDISH ENTRANCE

The tanar'ri arrive first. Most of the workers in Tavrat Chol Moc's tannery die within the first minute or so of their appearance. Then the fiends swarm out of the tannery—the goristro smashing through the wall and the armanites galloping out behind it as well as through the door. They attack anyone and everyone they see. While the tanar'ri express surprise at being met by defending armies (they have no idea, at first, that the faction war is happening or that the mortals they see aren't a united front), they welcome the opportunity to fight and immediately charge at both faction armies.

The baatezu look before they leap. Appearing in the alleyway, they explore the area, spying around both sides and flying up and over the building to get a good view. Unlike the tanar'ri, they know that their fiendish enemies will be present when they arrive. Nidaan has three goals: defeat the tanar'ri present, close and defend the demons' portal so that no more can appear, and move more of his own troops into the Cage through the baatezu portal.



With the introduction of all these fiends and the negative energies that they carry with them, it begins to rain in the Lower Ward. The normal fog and smoke gather into unnatural clouds that bellow with ominous thunder. The sudden downpour of black, oily rain reduces visibility to only about 15 to 20 feet on the streets for the remainder of the battle—for fiend and mortal alike. Dark storms such as these have happened only a few times before in Sigil's recorded history. It merely accentuates the fact that these are portentous times. (Elsewhere in the Cage, the Eschaton records the storm and uses it as further proof that The End is near.)

While the fiends of either side don't appear in numbers that might threaten all of Sigil (yet), they represent a serious threat to the small armies positioned in the Lower Ward. Lacking magical weapons to affect the fiends, at least half of the warriors near the now-open gates flee from the scene entirely.

The goristro begins randomly destroying buildings in the area regardless of the actions taken by the baatezu, the Cager warriors, or its fellow tanar'ri. It continues to do so until slain. The Xaositects take delight in this (for they came to destroy buildings in the first place) and do what they can to help. Some of them are certainly killed by the huge tanar'ri's destructive actions, while others die at the hands of the armanites who attack anything in their path.

Inside the tannery, Ely Cromlich and 20 Doomguard warriors armed with magical weapons mind the portal on the catwalks above the boiling vats, prepared to signal for more tanar'ri to come through. Nidaan and 10 abishai smash their way into the place through the back to take control of the gate while the others attack the rampaging tanar'ri. While Tonat Shar would like to send some of his troops in to keep more fiends from appearing, he can't break past the attacking tanar'ri outside. When the baatezu appear, the Hardheads and their allies don't recognize them as being different than the other fiends and attack them as well, creating a complicated three-way conflict with the mortals receiving the worst end of it.

If the PCs enter the tannery (if they're with the Harmonium, Tonat Shar may very well ask or command them to), they'll have to fight their way through a number of armanites and abishai. Luckily, the PCs won't be alone, and the fiends will be fighting each other as well. The battle'll be confusing. A foe might attack a character one round and a nearby fiend the next, while that second fiend attacks the PC—and so on. Inside Tavat Chol Moc, Cromlich stands near the portal—and it won't take a graybeard to tumble to the fact that he's behind the whole thing. Due to the horrible smell within the place, all attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks by nonfiends suffer a -1 penalty.

Meanwhile, the Indeps follow the PCs' lead if the bloods take the reigns of command, leading the forces into the fray with the hope of helping or protecting folks on the street or in nearby buildings—particularly those endangered by the goristro's rampage. The giant ignores most attackers (particularly if they don't have weapons potent enough to

harm it) and concentrates on pure destruction until it loses half of its tremendous total of hit points, when it lashes out at any creature it sees.

THE BATTLE CONTINUES

While the fight for the portal inside Tavat Chol Moc continues, the tanar'ri reinforcements begin to come through. Cromlich sends a signal and 35 more armanites arrive, bringing with them certain doom for the baatezu and a lot more suffering for Sigil. When they appear, it should become obvious to even the thickest of leatherheads that this incursion must be stopped.

Eventually, Nidaan and his troops are forced back and they retreat to their portal to gather reinforcements. The baatezu charge out into the street, leaving Cromlich and his few remaining guards at the tanar'ri portal without opposition. NPCs occupy the guards while the heroes confront Ely Cromlich.

When the PCs approach Cromlich, they should be shocked by the cambion's condition. The once-robust Doomguard factor is only half of his former self—literally. During the fight with the mage Killeen Caine at the Battle of the Armory, Caine managed to control a rogue *sphere of annihilation* and direct it toward the cambion. Cromlich slew Caine the next moment, but the *sphere* brushed Cromlich's side while he gloated over his fallen foe. Instead of destroying him utterly, the *sphere* ate away his right arm and a large chunk of his side and leg. His dire wounds forced him to abandon the Armory and seek aid. Ironically, his own faction's restrictions prevented him from gaining complete healing. Though greatly diminished, Cromlich is still a formidable foe. The PCs must stop him from signaling for yet more tanar'ri to enter Sigil.

If seriously threatened, the Doomguard cambion attempts to divert the blame or attention of his enemies by telling the truth. He explains that a yagnoloth named Incarus is really behind the fiendish invasion, hoping to take advantage of the faction war to bring a weakened Sigil to its knees. He even tells them about the Temple of Darkness and how to reach it—a shaft in the sewers of the Hive Ward leads down deep to where the Temple lies. "He's the real threat to the city," Cromlich tells them. "If he's not stopped, the Cage'll be nothing but a kip for fiends."

Alternately, the DM may choose to have Cromlich deliver this crucial information to the PCs only if they promise to help him escape the tannery and the Harmonium troops. In this case, the heroes must sneak the wounded cambion past the assembled armies and to a safe place of his choosing.

If Cromlich is killed, one of his Doomguard followers can tell the PCs about Incarus and the Temple of Darkness—although the Sinker won't know exactly how to reach it.

ELY CROMLICH (Pl/♂ MARQUIS CAMBION/F18/DOOMGUARD/CE): AC 3; MV 9; hp 72, currently 40; THAC0 3 (1 with *ash blade*);

#AT 2; Dmg 1d8+4/1d8+4 (*ash blade*, Str bonus, faction ability); SA entropic blow (1/week); SD never surprised, spell-like abilities, immunities; SW healing; MR 30%; SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (14); XP 14,000.

Notes: The injuries Cromlich suffered have reduced his magical and physical abilities as noted. He has lost his spell-casting ability and even some of his native cambion talents.

SA—while engaged in melee with a lawful or good foe, Cromlich can try to use his faction's entropic blow; if the attack roll is 5 or more points higher than the number needed to hit, the foe automatically loses half his current hit points.

SD—casts *darkness*, 15' radius and *infravision* at will; suffers half damage from cold, magical fire, and gas; immune to electricity, normal fire, and poison.

SW—must fail a saving throw vs. spell for magical healing to work.

S 17, D 13, C 12, I 18, W 13, Ch 9.

Special Equipment: *ash blade* (bastard sword +2, +4 vs. lawful good opponents, acts as ring of fire resistance, casts *chilling touch* 3/day), plate mail.

A NASTY SURPRISE

What most folks (on both sides of the war) didn't know was that a force of 30 evil Sodkillers planned on showing up at the Civic Festhall to help the Indeps and Xaositects raze the place. Taking a different route, they approach the Sensate headquarters unimpeded by the defending forces or the approaching fiends. After waiting near the Festhall for their allies to appear, they eventually attack the place on their own, putting anyone who gets in their path into the dead-book. With most of the able-bodied defenders away, this barmy rampage ends in much loss of life and a fair amount of destruction before the evil bashers are driven off—unless of course, the PCs chose to position themselves there as defenders when they heard of the impending attack.

To make matters worse, a cadre of fiends—tanar'ri, to be exact—who heard that some of their fellows were attacking the Cage at its moment of weakness also decided to come to Sigil, but with a different agenda. They want revenge against Factol Erin Montgomery for a wrong she committed against the fiendish general Za'rafas long ago. Of course, the factol is nowhere to be found, but they don't realize that and end up assisting the Sodkillers in their attack on the Civic Festhall. These warrior tanar'ri consist of 20 more armanites. (If the DM has access to other tanar'ri statistics, she can substitute another type for variety's sake—chasmie, for example.)

The attackers never completely destroy the Civic Festhall, and the dramatic appearance of the fiends doesn't end the faction war. It's only a matter of time before the forces of one side or the other move against their enemies. For the time being, however, the fiendish invasion has hurt the bulk of the war-

ring forces and impelled them to rest and recuperate for a time.

But even sods in the full throes of war fever pause in their destructive frenzy when shortly after the battle, the Lady of Pain closes all the portals of Sigil, rendering them inoperable.

◆ THE PORTALS CLOSE ◆

This development banishes all doubt of the significance of present events. In no recorded history or ancient memory is there an instance of the portals of Sigil closing. The portals function as the life—and a body might dare say, the *purpose*—of Sigil. (It's not called the City of Doors for nothing, berk.)

It takes a while before folks tumble to the fact that *all* the portals have closed. At first, various bashers find that their keys suddenly don't work. They figure it's a localized thing—that particular portal's shifted somehow. 'Course, in some places the change is immediately distressing. For example, in the Godsmen's Foundry, the portal to the Elemental Plane of Fire that powers the furnaces instantly ceases providing the much-needed heat.

Within several hours, not a soul in the Cage hasn't learned that the portals no longer work. In the Market Ward—where the situation became evident very quickly as folks found their trade routes abruptly cut off—bashers tumbled to the fact that without portals, there's no more food or water coming into Sigil. No one really keeps much in the way of stores in the Cage due to problems of spoilage and space, so

folks estimate that there's probably a week's worth of food in the whole city, including whatever the various restaurants and taverns have in their limited storerooms. The

water shortage is actually more serious (for the reserves are much smaller), but can be solved by purifying the water that exists—such as the rain or the filthy water in the Ditch. Smart folks cozy up to (or kidnap) any cleric they can find, knowing that these godly servants can

conjure food and water.

Needless to say, folks in the City of Doors begin to panic. The Market Ward devolves into a tremendous riot as bashers try to gather up what food exists. Fights erupt and blood is spilt over even a small loaf of bread. 'Course, the canniest bloods realize that the *real* worry is air to breathe. Even something so basic as the Cage's air comes in through the portals. There's probably a little more than a week's worth of air trapped in Sigil. Meanwhile, other things are trapped too: The water level in the Ditch begins to rise. Garbage begins to pile up in the streets.

Folks mob the dabus, seeking answers. They demand to know not only why the portals have closed, but (more importantly) when they'll open again. The dabus only reply, "by the will of the Lady." The barmiest or most addle-coved among the Cagers cry out to the Lady for aid or forgiveness. A few, most of them Fated, figure that there must be something that they can do to convince the Lady to open the portals. The

I GUESS
IT'S THE CITY
OF CLOSED DOORS
NOW, EH?
—DAAVIS LI+BAS,
CAGER BARKEEP

Dustmen see it as a good thing—the Lady is introducing the whole city to death all at once. Most folks, however, realize that it's out of their hands. These events serve as a reminder that everyone in Sigil lives only by the will of the Lady.

In the immediate situation, the fiends don't have the numbers to threaten all of Sigil without the possibility of reinforcements from the portals. Eventually, even the goristro falls to those who take up the defense of the city. This whole series of events holds the Cage's attention, however, and the larger the part the PCs played in helping to defeat the invaders, the more likely that they'll be lauded as heroes and the current chant will carry their names.

◆ THE DEPTHS ◆ OF UNDERSIGIL ◆

The chant now calls the short-lived invasion the Darkstorm. The next portion of adventure presents even more extraordinary obstacles and dangers, however, and should only be undertaken by clever bloods with top-shelf magic.

Most of the time, yugoloths don't maintain much of a presence in Sigil. A few hang about, offering their services as mercenaries or contacts for large mercenary forces. Others (like A'kin or Shemeshka the Marauder) become involved in Cager affairs, but most folks look upon them as exceptions rather than representatives of their race.

A few bloods who know the dark of UnderSigil know that the yugoloths have a significant—but hidden—presence in the Cage. Deep below the streets lies the Temple of Darkness. No powers are revered there; the name simply conveys the place's aura of fear and evil. The Temple is a secret base of dozens of powerful yugoloths.

Found far below the Hive Ward, the Temple of Darkness is dedicated to the forces of secrecy and darkness themselves—ideals all yugoloths appreciate. A yagnoloth named Incarus serves as the “high priest” of the Temple. His servants include two nycaloth lieutenants (Vanuire and Ghargaross) and a large force of mezzoloth, piscoloth, and canoloth underlings.

At the center of the temple lies a device called the Nightmare Shaft. A powerful magical artifact, the Shaft allows the yugoloths to seep into the dreams of others. The poor sods don't even have to be fast asleep; the yugoloths can insinuate their whispered commands even into a body's waking daydreams or listless musings. The fiends use the Nightmare Shaft to gather information, slowly induce madness in given targets, and even assassinate by encouraging suicide. In the hands of the yugoloths, this device deserves the name “nightmare.”

Using the Nightmare Shaft, Incarus and his underlings serve as spies in Sigil. Virtually no one is aware of their presence, and no one is safe from their manipulations.

THE TEMPLE OF DARKNESS

VEIL OF DARKNESS. Surrounding the entire temple is a veil of magical darkness 100 feet thick. Impenetrable even by mag-

ical light, this curtain serves to frighten off intruders. If the fiends know of an imminent attack, they attempt to engage their foes within the darkness where the blind canoloths have the advantage.

GUARD POSTS. Two mezzoloths guard these stations at all times. A strange heartlike device lies in the corner of the chamber, connected to what look like large veins or nerve strands. If threatened the mezzoloths squeeze the heart, sending a telepathic warning impulse into both the Outer and Inner Temples via the strands. This silent alarm alerts all yugoloths in the temple but leaves intruders unaware that they've been detected.

BARRACKS. Most of the yugoloths call kip in these simple and unremarkable chambers. Each room houses four 'loths. Many of the bored fiendish underlings in the temple have taken to gambling, and two or three might be found in such activities here if caught unaware. (The mezzoloths enjoy taking advantage of the canoloths in games where sight is a benefit but not completely necessary.)

NYCALOTH CHAMBERS. These high-ups only leave their brooding kip if absolutely necessary or if directly ordered by Incarus—which he rarely does, since he (wisely) doesn't trust them. The room is well appointed and filled with gothic, baroque statuary and distasteful, darkly garish paintings.

OUTER TEMPLE. This large area is draped in black curtains and decorated with fiendish statues, each covered by a black shroud to symbolize secrecy. The yugoloths keep this area dimly lit with a grayish magical light. Visitors will likely encounter most of the mezzoloths or canoloths relaxing or meditating here.

INNER TEMPLE. Within the center of the Temple of Darkness, the Inner Temple holds the secret of secrets—the Nightmare Shaft. Two piscoloths are assigned to guard the Shaft at all times. More fiends (including Incarus himself) are present if the Shaft is actually in use. The Shaft appears to be a deep, black hole in the ground with a stone rim built around it, but those who enter it pass into the thoughts and dreams of a desired target. The victim may make a saving throw versus spell to resist the sent images, but he is never aware of any sort of intrusion regardless. The being using the Nightmare Shaft must also make a saving throw halfway through his mental journey (Magic Resistance has no effect). If the user fails his saving throw, he is either ejected from the Shaft immediately (50% chance) or he is rendered completely mad by the disorienting and bizarre experience. Using the Nightmare Shaft to probe or alter the thoughts and dreams of another takes 1d4 hours.

Incarus the yagnoloth inhabits a secret chamber below the Inner Temple when not working. Within his dark and foul dwelling he keeps a supply of an enchanted herb. This plant,

when burned, allows him to enter a trance in which he is able to communicate with his mysterious masters on the Lower Planes. He uses the herb to inform them of the secrets that he and his dream spies learn using the Nightmare Shaft.

YUGOLOTHS

A cutter opposing these particular 'loths has one thing going for him: Not a one of the fiends doesn't have its own sly tricks and designs against the others. Brooding down in the bowels of Sigil for so long, these yugoloths plot and scheme against each other and turn stag at the drop of the proverbial hat.

All yugoloths have the following abilities in common:

alter self, animate dead, cause disease, charm person, improved phantasmal force, produce flame, and teleport without error at will. They take half damage from all gas attacks and are immune to acid, fire, and poison. All suffer double damage from cold attacks. Normally yugoloths can *gate* more of their kind, but since this ability cannot bring in fiends from outside of the Cage, it is not presented here.

MEZZOLOTHS (10): AC -1; MV 15; HD 10+20; hp 66 each; THACO 11; #AT 2 or 1; Dmg 1d6+6/1d6+6 (claw/claw) or 1d6+6 (spear) or 1d4 (cross-bow); SA spell-like abilities; SD immunities; MR 50%; SZ M (7' tall); ML elite (14); Int low (6); AL NE; XP 21,000.

SA—casts *burning hands*, *cause serious wounds*, *cloudkill* (1/day), *darkness* 15' radius, *detect invisibility* (always active), *detect magic*, *dispel magic* (2/day), *flame strike* (1/day), *hold person*, *mirror image*, *sleep*, and *trip*.

SD—+2 or better weapon to hit; immune to paralysis, *charm*, and *suggestion*; cold attacks inflict normal damage rather than double.

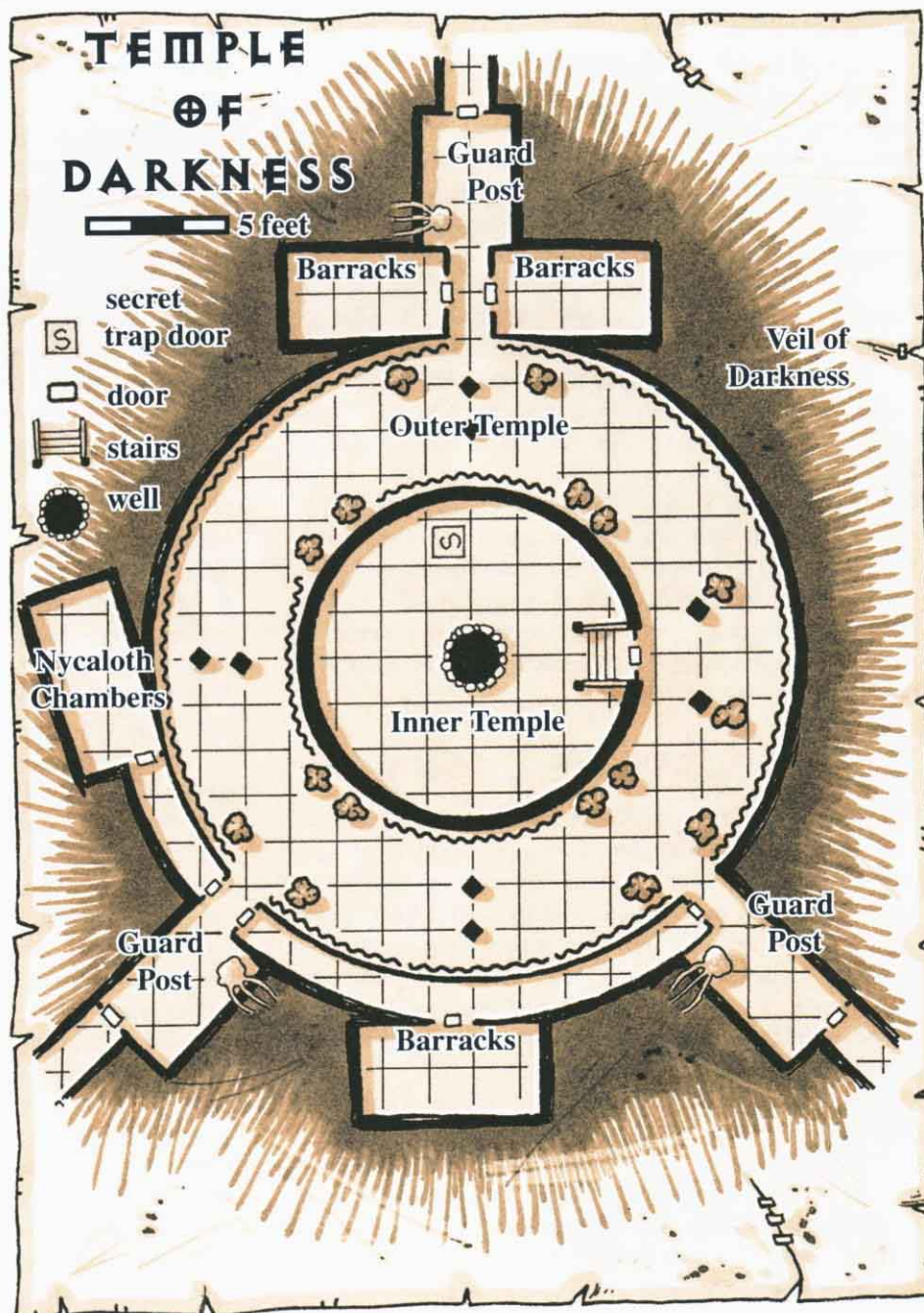
PISCOLOTHS (2): AC -5; MV 6. Sw 18; HD 9+18; hp 54 each; THACO 11; #AT 2; Dmg 2d8/2d8; SA sever, poison, spell-like abilities; SD immunities; MR 40%; SZ M (5' tall); ML elite (13); Int very (12); AL NE; XP 19,000.

SA—pincers sever limbs on a roll of 20; mouth tentacles attack for

1d10 damage plus a deadly poison with a -2 saving throw penalty; casts *bind*, *blink*, *emotion*, *jump*, *know alignment*, *meld into stone*, *phantasmal killer* (2/day), *protection from good*, *resist fire*, *scare*, and *stinking cloud*.

SD—+1 or better weapon to hit, never surprised, water-based attacks inflict -1 point of damage per die.

CANOLOTHS (4): AC 0; MV 18; HD 6+12; hp 45 each; THACO 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/3d4+3 (claw/claw/bite); SA bite, entangle, spell-like abilities; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, immune to sight-affecting attacks; MR 25%; SZ M (6' long); ML fearless (20); Int low (5-7); AL NE; XP 9,000.



SA—bite destroys armor on a roll of 19 or 20 (magical armor allowed a saving throw); tongue entangles foes 20 feet away, inflicting 1d6 damage (foe must save versus paralyzation or be helplessly entangled and drawn forward for automatic bite, bend bars roll frees); casts *cloudkill* (1/day), *darkness* 15' radius, *fear*, *passwall*, and *shout* (1/day); not hindered by darkness or invisibility.

VANUIRE AND GHARGAROSS, NYCALOTHS: AC -6; MV 12. FI 36 (C); HD 11+22; hp 76 and 80; THACO 9 (5 with *axe*); #AT 2 or 1; Dmg 1d8+8/1d8+8 (claw/claw) or 1d8+9 (*battle axe* +1, Str bonus); SA claws, spell-like abilities; SD +2 or better weapon to hit, immune to all enchantment/charm spells; MR 70%; SZ L (9' tall); ML champion (16); Int exceptional (15); AL NE; XP 25,000.

SA—claws inflict wounds that bleed for 1d6 hp per round until healed magically; cast *command* (3/day), *comprehend languages*, *detect invisibility*, *detect magic* (all always active), *dimension door* (3/day), *dispel magic*, *enlarge*, *reduce*, *fear* (by touch), *invisibility*, *mirror image* (3/day), *polymorph self*, *project image*, *read magic* (always active), *reverse gravity* (1/day), *wind walk*, and *word of recall* (1/day).

INCARUS, YAGNOLOTH: AC -4; MV 18; HD 10+20; hp 62; THACO 11; #AT 2; Dmg 1d12 (fist) and 1d8+2 (*long sword* +2); SA acid cloud, *shocking grasp*, devour; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, suffers half damage from earth-based attacks; SZ L (12' tall); ML elite (13); Int exceptional (16); AL NE; XP 20,000.

SA—breathes a cloud of acid 3/day that inflicts 6d6 damage (save for half) and stuns for 1d6 rounds (1d3 if save versus paralysis is successful); casts *shocking grasp* (1d8+10 damage) 3/day; devours 10–100% of unconscious foes' experience points, hit points, and ability scores after 5 rounds of physical contact (killing the yagnoloth within 24 hours or a *restoration* spell restores loss).

◆ THE FLOW OF EVENTS ◆

PCs who learn of Incarus and decide to confront the fiend can follow Ely Cromlich's directions well enough to find the entrance after an hour or so of mucking around in the sewers. Exploring the sewers is a nasty undertaking in and of itself which may lead to strange or dangerous encounters; these sewer tunnels connect to the catacombs frequented by the Dustmen, a variety of undead, and even the Master of the Bones (PI/♂ human/P25/Free League/N) and his wererat servants.

A dark shaft leads down into the bowels of the Cage, dripping with filth and the stench of ancient dead. No staircase offers itself as a means of descent; the PCs must find their own way down the 200-foot drop. A maze of ancient tunnels stretches away from the bottom of the shaft, three of them eventually passing through the veil of darkness and into the yugoloth stronghold.

Sneaking into the Temple of Darkness isn't as difficult as it might appear, if a blood keeps his wits about him. Fact is, the mezzoloth guards will let anyone (or anything) past them for the right garnish. In this case, the bribe must be a magical item of some sort, although even a potion will do. Once the heroes pass the guards, the yugoloths won't *immediately* attack them and a cutter can use that time to speak with the fiends she encounters, using a clever cover story or making some sort of deal. Most of the yugoloths can be convinced to turn stag if the argument's presented properly and a cutter uses the right amount of flattery, garnish, and lies. A tricky cony-catcher could tell a few lies, turn a few fiends against one another, accomplish his goals, and sneak out quickly enough to escape with his life. DMs should note that *invisibility* won't fool the canoloths or the mezzoloths, so it doesn't provide a way in or out past the fiends.

Bashers going in for a straight-up fight find the yugoloths fairly well organized. After only three rounds, those 'loths in the Outer Temple come to help guards attacked at their post—which means all of the canoloths and those mezzoloths not on duty at the other posts (they won't abandon their stations unless directly ordered). They won't, however, follow any foes that retreat—instead, they'll wait until a high-up appears. One nycaloth troubles himself to arrive in 10 rounds, at which time he *might* send out a few canoloths to follow the fleeing attackers, mostly to learn more about their identities and why they attacked.

The nycaloths hate Incarus (and each other), so quick-witted PCs need only employ a little persuasion to turn them against their superior. However, slaying the yagnoloth just so Vanuire or Ghargaross can take his place really doesn't accomplish much good. PCs who speak with the yugoloths may tumble to the fact that with the destruction of the Nightmare Shaft, the Temple of Darkness becomes little more than a kip full of bored fiends.

The Nightmare Shaft ceases function and loses all power if a body inflicts 50 points of damage upon the well-like structure around it, or if a caster sends a large destructive spell (like *fireball* or *lightning bolt*) down into it. With the Shaft destroyed, the yugoloths eventually abandon the Temple. Incarus loses face and one of the nycaloths takes command over the lesser 'loths (after putting the other nycaloth in the dead-book, most likely), leading them back to Gehenna.

If the PCs confront Incarus directly, he defends himself if necessary but a return attack from him is unlikely. He knows that the Lady has canceled the power of Sigil's portals and that his plans are ruined. He also knows that the secret of the Temple of Darkness has been exposed (and—perhaps—the Nightmare Shaft's been destroyed as well). Most likely, he'll face demotion and disgrace among his fellow yugoloths. Instead of a climactic fight, then, Incarus greets the PCs with nothing more than harsh words.

"Fools. You fight your little faction war over petty disputes about who controls what and who sides with whom. The factions have lost sight of what they originally stood for—belief! And now you need me, a yugoloth, to point it out to you. Pitiful."

"Not everyone has forgotten what really moves the multiverse. While the war continues and you hack at each other with swords and spells, a few look for the key to unleashing the true power of belief. Look to the wizard Vadelisu, ignorant ones! My scheme of invasion may have failed, but the secret of the Sigil spell has been uncovered. Tremble at its power and remember your city as it was, for it will never be the same again!"

Rather than stay and debate, listen to the PCs' comments or questions, or fight, Incarus teleports away and hides elsewhere in Sigil until the portals once again open up and he can return to Gehenna. (There are no known portals into or out of the Temple of Darkness, to Gehenna or anywhere else.)

If the PCs never go to the Temple of Darkness, Incarus maintains his hold over the place and those yugoloths in his command, despite the fact that his plans for invasion never came to fruition. The Temple remains the secret point of power for the yugoloths in Sigil, and Incarus forms new schemes to take advantage of the turmoil above.

◆ AFTERMATH ◆

The Lower Ward suffered terrible damage and loss of life due to the Darkstorm. Folks are scared that the raging conflict might very well be the death of the city. When the Lady of Pain causes the portals to close, their terror increases a thousandfold. "Is this the end of Sigil?" they cry. "Has the Lady decided to simply destroy us all?"

Panic, dread, and worry grip the Cagers and refuse to let go. Folks hide in their kips and peer out into the street expecting the worst. The Hardheads regroup, but dissension grows among their allies as rumors spread of the conscription of non-Harmonium men and women into their ranks and appropriation of their allies' forces and resources. The Sensates and Signers might be willing to ally with the Hardheads during a crisis, but they've no desire to *join* them. The Doomguard are virtually no more—leaderless, decimated, and scattered to the planes. No leader from their allies seems forthcoming, but what berk would expect one from the Indeps, the Xaositects, or the Sodkillers?

But just when all looks most dire, a surprising new secret is uncovered—one that had existed beneath the nose of everyone in Sigil.

Literally.



Think about it a minute. The burg's called Sigil. Doesn't that mean anything to you? A sigil's a symbol—wizards and their kind use them to hold magic. Just like a word holds and keeps meaning, a sigil can hold power.

◆ IN BRIEF ◆

ACT V: MAGIC UNCAGED

Trapped within Sigil itself a spell waits, ready to be cast. While the battle for the Cage rages on, someone seeks to unleash this power to bring the conflict to an end—but at what price, and giving the victory to which faction?

By penetrating the depths of the mysterious region known as UnderSigil, a group of planewalkers discovers the secret of the Sigil spell. Bringing it to the surface, they must decide—with full knowledge of the consequences—whether or not the spell should be cast. While

forces array against them, they must either protect the one who performs the rite or try to ensure that the spell fails.

◆ THE CHANT ◆

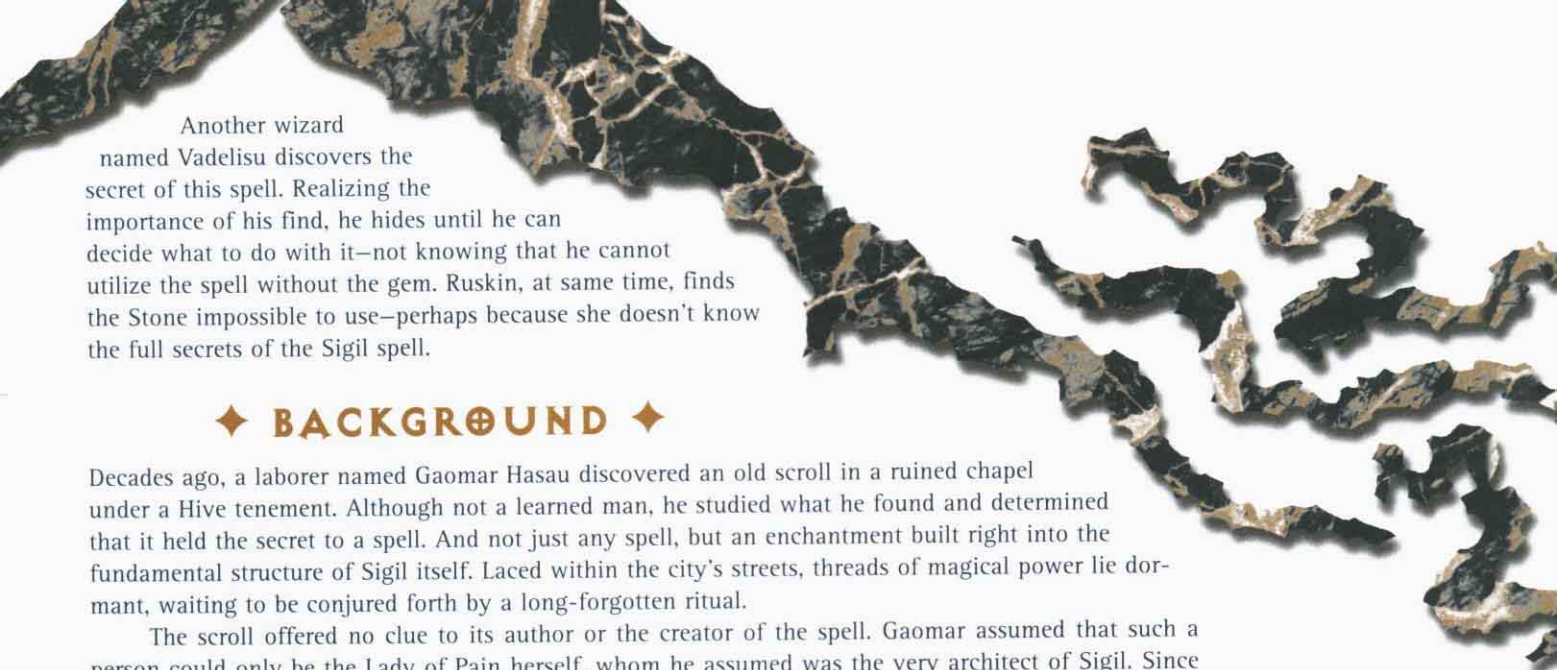
The chant on the street reflects nothing but forecasts of doom and gloom. No end to the conflict lies within sight, and everyone's started to feel the pains of war. Worse and more worrisome yet, the portals of the city suddenly stopped working just a few scant days earlier. No portals mean no trade, no new food shipments, no fresh water, and no escape. Clerics throughout the city pray for guidance and aid from silent gods. People begin to think that the Lady of Pain has left, is dead, or has decided to destroy all of Sigil. By now, most folks have tumbled to the fact that it was the Lady herself who was responsible for the disappearance of most of the factions. Could it be that she's decided to eliminate everyone—one way or another—starting at the top and now working her way down? The doom-sayers of the Eschaton gather more and more followers, but even they grow discontented because they have no real answers.

The key to the puzzle comes from a completely unexpected direction. The PCs have possibly gotten a hint of the true dark from various sources. The message sent by Shemeshka the Marauder in Act III mentioned the Sigil spell, Alluvius Ruskin, "the gem," and a place known as Nowhere—a word which observant heroes should remember from a dream one of them experienced during Act I. The yagnoloth Incarus directly spoke of Vadelisu and the Sigil spell in Act IV. Now it's time for them to begin putting the pieces together.

◆ THE DARK ◆

When Rowan Darkwood is thrown into the Lady's Mazes, the Labyrinth Stone—the focus of all his plans—does not go with him. Instead, it remains in the City of Doors, passing between owners until it falls into the clutches of the tiefling sorceress Alluvius Ruskin. The gem holds the key to unlocking a powerful spell stored within the Cage.

⊕H, YES.
LE+'S S⊕DDING +R⊕D
+HR⊕UGH +HE SEWERS
⊕F +HE CAGE.
I CAN'+ +HINK ⊕F
ANY+HING I'D S⊕DDING
RA+HER D⊕.
—UC⊕C ⊕RDELL



Another wizard named Vadelisu discovers the secret of this spell. Realizing the importance of his find, he hides until he can decide what to do with it—not knowing that he cannot utilize the spell without the gem. Ruskin, at same time, finds the Stone impossible to use—perhaps because she doesn't know the full secrets of the Sigil spell.

◆ BACKGROUND ◆

Decades ago, a laborer named Gaomar Hasau discovered an old scroll in a ruined chapel under a Hive tenement. Although not a learned man, he studied what he found and determined that it held the secret to a spell. And not just any spell, but an enchantment built right into the fundamental structure of Sigil itself. Laced within the city's streets, threads of magical power lie dormant, waiting to be conjured forth by a long-forgotten ritual.

The scroll offered no clue to its author or the creator of the spell. Gaomar assumed that such a person could only be the Lady of Pain herself, whom he assumed was the very architect of Sigil. Since she built the city, she must have placed the spell within it as well. Gaomar believed that simply reading the scroll had placed his life in danger. He hid the scroll away and never looked at it again.

Years later the scroll reappeared, this time in the hands of an antiquities dealer named Nro. No one knows exactly how he obtained the scroll, but then no one knows exactly where Gaomar hid it, either.

Nro didn't know what he had—he figured it to be a potent spell scroll, but nothing more. Thus, he allowed it to slip through his fingers. For some paltry few thousand jink, Nro sold the scroll containing the dark of one of Sigil's greatest secrets to a wizard who happened into his shop one day.

The wizard Vadelisu discovered the true meaning of the scroll. He was even smart enough to link it with the legends surrounding the incredibly ancient wizard who had challenged the Lady herself untold millennia ago. Like Gaomar before him, he immediately knew fear. He knew he had an opportunity for great power in his grasp, but he didn't know exactly what to do with it. Not long before, he had learned of the greatest and safest place to hide in all the Cage—a place called Nowhere. Using the last of his savings, he fled to this sanctuary to give himself time to consider his next step.

◆ SET UP ◆

Hopefully, the PCs will be inspired to begin investigating the things they've learned on their own. Putting two and two together, they should realize that somebody named Vadelisu knows the dark of the Sigil spell (although they might not know what that means), and that he's in a place called Nowhere. Another basher (who they might already know) named Alluvius Ruskin has a gem that is somehow connected to this whole mess. That's not a lot to go on, but enough to start with if they're self-motivated. Even if they only know the name "Vadelisu" or that there's a place called Nowhere which holds an important secret, it's enough to start doing research or asking questions of the right people. See "Independent Research" below.

If the PCs weren't privy to that important information, they're contacted by someone who is. As the war rages around the PCs, they hear from a group or person that they respect and trust. (DMs should tailor the NPC to fit the PC group.) A messenger tells them of an important secret that could end the war—or bring even greater doom upon the Cage. The contact explains that a secret scroll detailing something called the Sigil spell has been uncovered by a wizard named Vadelisu. The spell is a potent magical force that few understand, but all suspect that its power is enough to change the course of history. With this dark uncovered, both sides of the faction war are sure to strive for the Sigil spell. Moreover, nobody knows which side (if any) Vadelisu is on, or what he plans to do with the spell. The PCs, as the most capable bloods available, must find Vadelisu and learn the dark of the Sigil spell. See "Hired to Investigate," below.

INDEPENDENT+ RESEARCH

Smart planewalkers will realize at the outset that while they know some important secrets, they don't yet know enough. Some sort of research is in order.

The easiest, most straightforward way to learn important information—particularly about historical events or people—is in a library. The Lady's Ward's Great Library, run by the dabus themselves, offers a great deal of information. Most faction headquarters, particularly the City Courts and the Hall of Records, can also provide information. But research takes a long time. After 2d6 hours of pouring over books and scrolls, the PCs learn of Gaomar (see the Background section, above) and the strange scroll that he found. There's nothing to be found about the Sigil spell specifically, though. Bashers researching Nowhere can find, after a few more hours of reading, that the utterly untraceable and impregnable Nowhere offers utter sanctuary; some mysterious beings called the Twelve serve as high-ups in the place.

There's another kind of research in the Cage besides book searching. A body can learn a lot just by listening to the chant—provided he asks the right questions of the right bloods. Most likely, the PCs have made contacts here or there, and now's the time to use them. A tout, top-shelf wizard, or simple chant-broker might be able to tell them about Vadelisu. "He's a wizard," they'll say, "who apparently tumbled to some great bit of knowledge or a fantastic treasure. Now he's holed himself up all peery-like to protect it." A few well-lanned bloods might even have heard that he went to Nowhere. No one on the street knows about the Sigil spell.

'Course, the PCs might very well know that Shemeshka the Marauder, King of the Cross-Trade, has some of the dark after hearing her message in Act III. Unless they've already got a relationship with her or have a good path "in" with the knights of the post in Sigil's underworld, an attempt to reach the arcanaloth hits the blinds. Even if they do talk to her, Shemeshka won't spill the chant on so valuable a secret unless the PCs offer some top-shelf garnish or the dark of something equally priceless.

The characters also learn that a guide to Nowhere might be found in an UnderSigil locale known as Dim Home. The quickest—although not necessarily the easiest—way into the realms down below lies in The Lady's Ward. In the area known as the High Houses, an old mansion's labyrinthine catacombs offer a direct passage into UnderSigil—or so the chant says.

Bashers might figure that Alluvius Ruskin's involved in all of this somehow as well, but going to her accomplishes little. She'll tell the PCs *nothing*. It's not in her best interest to discuss her own affairs concerning the Labyrinth Stone, and she doesn't know anything about Vadelisu or the Sigil spell. However, she might tumble to the idea that the PCs know something about the gem and the reason she

can't use it—which could be a dangerous situation for them. A crafty wordsmith herself, Alluvius tries to pry as much information out of them as she can. Unfortunately, everything and anything the PCs say'll probably work against them later on....

If the cutters really start reaching, they might even visit the Gatehouse and inquire about the "Oldest Barmy" who has prophesied the whole faction war with such accuracy. At this stage in the adventure, however, it's too early for such a confrontation to be worthwhile. See Act VI: The Unity of Rings for more information.

HIRED +⊕ INVEST+IGA+E

The PCs' contact tells them that Vadelisu hides in a secret sanctuary called Nowhere. A body can *only* reach there with the help of a guide, and such guides are hard to find and expensive. The contact then presents the PCs with a *bag of holding* containing jink and sparkle and says that there should be enough in the bag to pay for passage into Nowhere; the PCs can keep whatever's left over (and the bag) as payment for themselves.

The bag contains 12,000 gp worth of gold and gems for each PC—that means 2,000 gp each plus the *bag of holding* after the 10,000 gp per-person fee to gain entrance into Nowhere is paid.

THE PA+H ◆ +⊕ NOWHERE ◆

Once the PCs learn what they need to know and set out to find Vadelisu, the adventure becomes fairly straightforward. The PCs move from the crypts in The Lady's Ward, through the sewers to Dim Home, and then on to Nowhere. It's not until they reach Vadelisu that the difficult part begins.

The following locations present a direct path to Nowhere and then the hidden place itself. 'Course, the heroes might learn of another way to contact a guide to Nowhere, in which case the DM can skip the Nontegue crypt and Dim Home locations.

THE LAST+ REST+ ⊕F +⊕ THE NON+EGUES

About five years ago, a tremor shook a small portion of The Lady's Ward. Most people were able to pinpoint the center of the disruption as the Nontegue Manor—a long-abandoned manse that once ranked among the grandest of the High Houses. Three days after the tremor, folks tumbled to the fact that it wasn't abandoned at all when two of the Nontegues came running out of the palace, terrified for their lives.

It seemed that the Nontegues—long known for their eccentricity—had, 20 years previous, given up their servants and their social positions in order to shut themselves off from the rest of the city. There, they planned to live out their

days in seclusion among the only folks worthy of their company—each other. Food and other supplies were secretly shipped in to them as they lived out their lives in self-imposed isolation.

The Nontegues buried their dead in an elaborate crypt underneath their home. As members of the family passed on, the living were forced to dig new tunnels and chambers in the crypt. (Actually, the Nontegues replaced all of their servants with magical constructs, so it was they who did the digging.)

When matriarch Nelda Nontegue died, a new chamber was created for her. This digging triggered the tremor that everyone in the neighborhood above felt, for the workers pressed too closely to a previously unknown complex of tunnels. Weakened by the new construction, many of the passages and chambers collapsed.

The real terror began when *things* started coming through the gaping holes in the foundation. The monsters crawled up into the Nontegue house, attacking the long-secluded golden lords. Only two escaped. Their feverish tales did little to enlighten others about what really happened and what the creatures were. To heighten the mystery, the two Nontegues, Nino (Pl/♂ human/M4/N) and Norinda (Pl/♀ human/F3/N), forbade anyone from entering the manor.

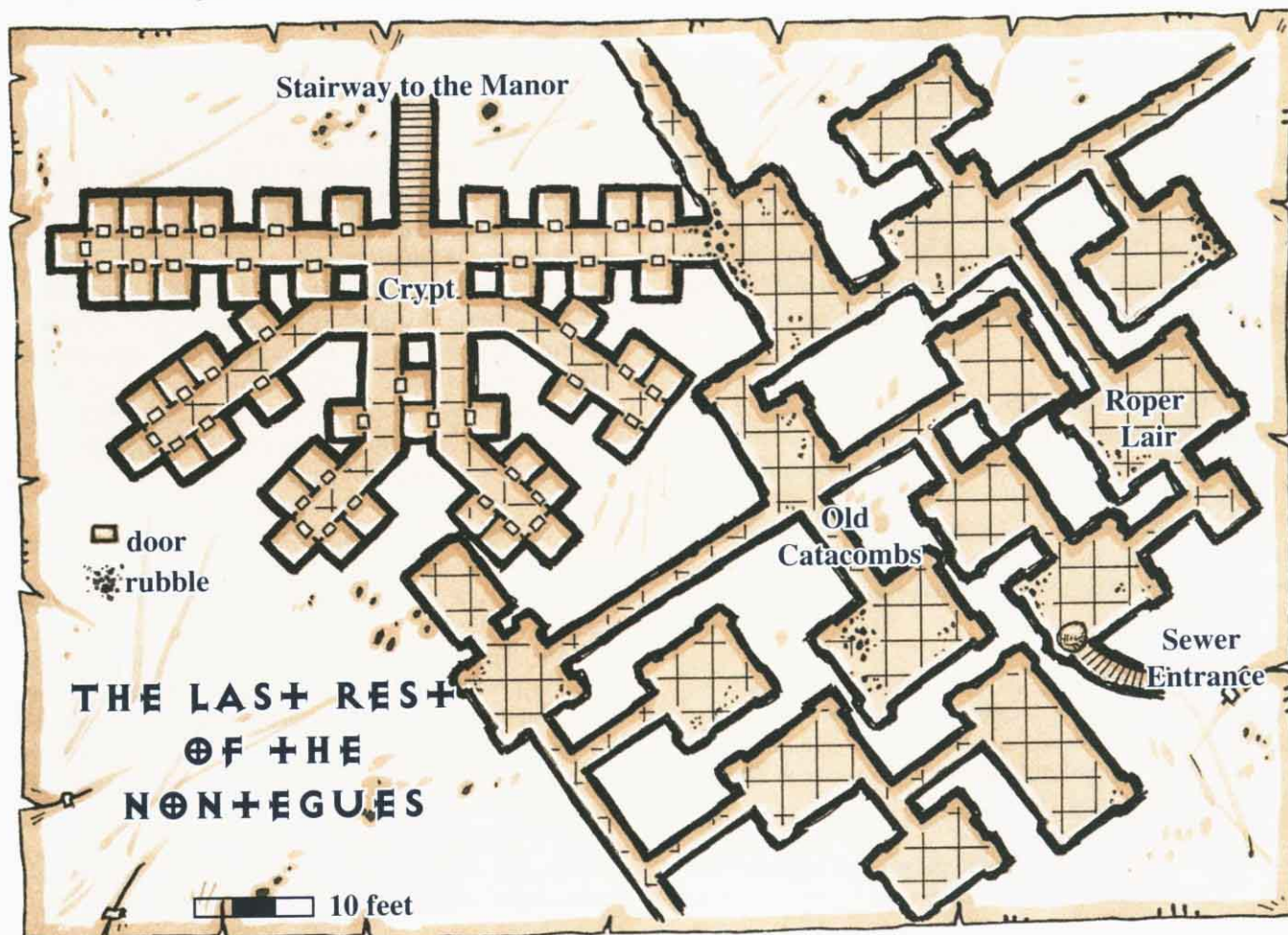
So the Nontegue crypt is a known entrance point lead-

ing to the Realm Below, yet it holds many dangers and mysteries. Danger and mystery don't stop adventurers, though—they draw them.

THE HOUSE ABOVE

Many of the Nontegues practiced sorcery, and they warded their manor with a number of magical defenses and protections. However, most of the magical seals guarding the main entrance were dispelled long ago, except for an ever-renewing 12th-level *wizard lock* spell that must be overcome (the doors are virtually indestructible).

Most of the palace lies unexplored and undisturbed because folks believed the real mysteries to be below. That's both true and not true. Plenty of secrets hide in the house itself, but to uncover them a basher has to pass a number of magical traps as well as many of the still-functioning constructs—which include golems, necrophidii, animate suits of armor, and a particularly nasty cast-iron statue of a 12-headed hydra that attacks anyone without the proper password. Nino and Norinda were trying to protect these secrets from intruders. Even though the siblings admit that they'll never reenter the house after seeing the horrors that came from below, they still don't want the family treasures looted. The palace and grounds stretch over an area the size of 12 city blocks, so there's a lot to explore.



THE CRYPT+ BELOW

The entrance to the crypts is a now-unprotected and not-so-secret door behind the grand stairway (visible as soon as a body enters the house itself). The crypts are filled throughout with a foot of dirty, stagnant water, leading some folks to believe that the collapse involved some of the nearby sewers. If true (and it is), no one's ever found the link to the drainage tunnels.

The monsters that attacked the Nontegues and now inhabit the crypt (and venture up into the manor now and again) are gulguthra, otherwise known as otyughs. These sewer-dwellers came to feed on fresh meat and then decided to stay. Led by a creature known as a roper, these horrible beasts have acted intelligently so far, concealing the egress into the sewers and hiding their identity from all but their prey. Their actions are conservative, as they hope to lure more and more victims into their clutches. The exceptionally intelligent but chaotically inclined roper, with the gulguthras' help, is also attempting to breed creatures called feyrs. Born from human fear, these disgusting monstrosities will introduce a new kind of terror to The Lady's Ward. Unfortunately for the monsters, they'll probably also bring the wrath of the authorities down on them.

STAIRWAY TO THE MANOR. Folks use this stairway to descend into the crypt.

CRYPT. This area comprises a number of small sepulchers, each holding a single deceased Nontegue and the narrow tunnels that connect them. In later years, the workmen were forced to place the crypts closer and closer together. Chant has it that some of the Nontegues still inhabit their crypts in the form of spectres, wraiths, and shadows. (The DM should place these as she wishes, if she wishes, in numbers that will challenge the PCs—that is, enough so that even if a PC cleric succeeds in his turning attempt, there's still one or two left to menace the group.)

GULGUTHRA: AC 3; MV 6; HD 8; hp 45 each; THACO 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1d8/1d8/1d4+1 (tentacle/tentacle/bite); SA grapple, disease; SD immune to disease, never surprised; SZ L (7' diameter); Int low (6); ML elite (14); AL N; XP 1,400.

SA—successful hit can grapple opponents for 2d2 hp damage per round (bite attacks against grappled foes gain +2 bonus); bite 90% likely to infect victim with debilitating (80%) or fatal (20%) disease.

OLD CATACOMBS. Older by far than the crypts of the Nontegues, these mysterious passages were known only to the gulguthra. Though the creatures dwell in the crypt area now, they still use these passages to reach the sewer to feed on refuse when fresh meat is unavailable.

ROPER LAIR. The leader of this strange group of monsters still calls kip in the central chamber of the old tunnel system. If

confronted, it claims that it's a blood named Terrigine, a golden lord who was polymorphed into this loathsome monster decades ago by a group of vengeful wizards. 'Course, it usually tells this tale right before it eats a victim, so who knows if that's the real dark or not? It does hoard a great deal of treasure in the form of art objects, jewelry, and other finery befitting one of the wealthy elite (12,000 gp worth all told).

TERRIGINE, A ROPER: AC 0; MV 3; HD 12; hp 68; THACO 9; #AT 1; Dmg 5d4 (bite); SA surprise, strength drain; SD immune to lightning, half damage from cold; SW -4 to saving throws versus fire; MR 80%; SZ L (9' long); Int exceptional (16); ML champion (15); AL CE; XP 12,000.

SA—attacks with -2 to opponents' surprise rolls; shoot up to six strands up to 50 feet which drain half victim's strength for 2d4 turns if a hit is scored (save versus poison to resist); strands pull victim 10 feet per round for automatic bite (victim can break strand by making an open doors roll, strand can be cut after 6 hp is inflicted against AC 0).

SEWER ENTRANCE. Hidden behind a large boulder, this entrance to the sewers occasionally allows creatures like rats (including cranium rats) and giant slugs in from the water-filled drainage tunnels. Even under The Lady's Ward, the sewers teem with horrors. Fortunately, the sewer tunnels eventually bring a traveler to Dim Home.

DIM HOME

Over 70 darkers call kip in Dim Home. Many of them operate in the above world as thieves and scavengers, bringing down food and supplies for the rest of the community.

The triplet sisters Fion, Driel, and Nios serve as the elected leaders of Dim Home. Born and raised in the Realm Below, their eyes don't function at all and their other senses have improved to compensate. Ten inhabitants of the underground community have infravision (two bariaur, two tieflings, two dwarves, an elf, a half-orc, a half-elf, and a kobold). They are known as the seers. The rest of the Dim Home residents are humans, githzerai, or other races without the ability to see in the dark.

The seers never go aboveground, remaining below to act as watchmen, spies, and scouts. The thieves and scavengers that do go up into Sigil come from among the "blind," who can of course see normally once they reach the streets of the Cage.

The inhabitants of Dim Home never willingly create any light here. They possess no torches or lamps—not even for emergencies. They look upon light as an evil thing that they gave up long ago to live in the catacombs. Not surprisingly, these darkers don't use fire at all, so they eat their food uncooked.

TRAP. A trap protects each of the four entrances to Dim Home. A wire stretches across the narrow passage and when

DΘ +HEY CALL YΘU DARKERS
'CAUSE YΘU LIVE DΘWN HERE
IN E+ETERNAL DARKNESS
ΘR BECAUSE YΘU KNΘW A
LΘ+ ΘF SECRE+S?
—YLAN+ROSS +HE MAGE

YES.
—DRIEL OF DIM HOME

YOU DARKERS
VE DOWN HERE
NAL DARKNESS
SE YOU KNOW A
OF SECRETS?
ROSS THE MAGE
HOME

one knows exactly where the shaft leads or just how deep it is. Trash of all sorts is dropped down this pit, and it serves as the ultimate punishment for crimes the leaders and the community deem to warrant a death penalty (which include many infractions). The threat of the pit serves to keep most of the darkers in line.

When the thieves and scavengers return from a gathering mission, the entire community celebrates here and gives thanks to their mysterious god (Sung Chiang, although they refer to him as the Lord of the Night Above and Below). Though the leaders discourage it, the thieves and scavengers don't always go all the way up into Sigil on their trips, instead raiding other inhabitants of the Realm Below. This has led to enemy attacks of Dim Home of late, so most of the darkers have become very peery.

Stretching off from both the ground level and the balcony are the narrow passages that lead to the individual darker quarters.



LEADERS' CHAMBERS. More spacious than the quarters of other darkers, the rooms inhabited by Fion, Driel, and Nios can accommodate visitors to Dim Home—though such occasions remain very rare.

INDIVIDUAL HOMES. These simple living quarters usually contain nothing more than a sleeping mat or two and the few possessions of the darker who lives there.

Visitors might notice a marking system used by the inhabitants of Dim Home that relies on touch rather than sight. The walls are marred with raised or gouged symbols to mark who lives where, to indicate directions, or to simply convey messages. The inhabitants also use marked stone slates to leave notes for others.

TANAR'RI. An alu-fiend named Thisinda (Pl/♀ alu-fiend/HD 2/Fated/CE) and three bar-lgura lair a half mile from Dim Home. These creatures seek to eventually kill the leaders of Dim Home and master the community of thieves themselves. An initial attack, however, resulted in the fiends' sound defeat. Now they ready a new, less-obvious scheme to achieve their goal.

BARMIES. Below Dim Home and through a winding labyrinth of abandoned wererat tunnels lies another darker camp. Most of its inhabitants are completely mad. The thieves from Dim Home have foolishly raided this camp again and again and made the madmen dire enemies. These barmies seek the utter destruction of Dim Home.

THE ABOMINATION. The tunnels around Dim Home serve as the hunting ground for a horrible monster that most darkers think of as some sort of giant, four-armed troll. Whatever it is, its size forces it to stick to the larger passages, which in turn encourages canny darkers to use the narrow ones. Still, the monster finds enough prey to thrive in the area.

FION, DRIEL, AND NIOS (Pl/♀ HUMANS/T7/LN): AC 8 (Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 28, 25, 22; THACO 17 (16 with thrown dagger); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SA ×3 backstab; SZ M (5'6" tall); ML champion (16); XP 975.

Notes: These three sisters share the duties and the benefits of ruling over Dim Home equally. While they don't always agree, they treat each other with respect—just like they treat all the inhabitants of their underground home. Each of the ghastly pale, slight triplets is blind, but they have no problem utilizing their other senses. In fact, in the darkness of Dim Home, it is they who hold the advantage.

S 11, D 16, C 10, I 14, W 15, Ch 16.

Special Equipment: Fion has a *dagger +1* (forged in the Outlands), and Nios has a *potion of extra healing* and a *potion of firebreath*.

Thief Skills: PP 70, OL 62, F/RT 50, MS 80, HS 55, HN 30, CW 93, RL 0.

TYPICAL DARKER (Pl/var/T2/N): AC 8 (leather armor); MV 12; hp 7; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SA ×2 backstab; SZ M (6' tall); Int average (10); ML average (9); XP 65.

Notes: Filthy and rag-clad, these folks're a peery lot but good-natured once a body's earned their trust. As mentioned above, a few possess infravision to see for the others in the dark, but all have the ability to operate without vision as well as any sighted berk in the light.

Thief Skills: PP 35, OL 29, F/RT 25, MS 21, HS 15, HN 10, CW 86, RL 45.

◆ NOWHERE ◆

When a basher finds himself in such incredibly dire straits that there's no place left to turn, when the most powerful, most determined bloods want him in the dead-book and have spared no expense to send the best trackers and killers to make sure it is done, when even the safest of safe houses offers no refuge, where can he go?

Nowhere.

Cross-traders talk about Nowhere when the lights are low, the music's soft, and everyone's speaking in hushed tones. Nowhere is a legend spoken of by folks who have no time for legends and fairy stories. "If it's real," they say, "then I want to know where it is in case I ever need it. But," they add, after thinking about it a moment, "if a berk like me knows where it is, then what good is it?"

Nowhere is a safe haven. It's a secret refuge for those who find themselves hunted and need a real escape. But canny bashers quickly tumble to the fact that it's no ordinary bolt-hole. The bloods who run this underground place keep it so safe, so secret, that it truly deserves its legendary reputation.

A group of mysterious figures known as the Twelve maintain Nowhere. Chant is they created the place when they themselves were on the run, and eventually saw the profit in selectively opening it up to others. Different rumors say that they're a group of altruistic bloods who just want to help folks in need. These rumors are usually countered by someone else saying just the opposite—that the Twelve're as evil as they come and Nowhere is a means to an unknown but nefarious end.

FINDING NOWHERE

No one's going to stumble upon Nowhere by accident, and no one's going to find it by just looking around. Even folks familiar with the underground labyrinths of Sigil don't have a clue as to its location.

See, Nowhere isn't just hidden underground. It's protected by magic so searchers are misdirected into looking somewhere else. Chant is that it's really an old dabus warren abandoned long ago and converted by the Twelve into the ultimate safe house. If this is true, then the same forces that render the hidey-holes of the dabus completely undetectable also protect this place—potent defenses indeed.

The only real way to find this place is by invitation. The Twelve have agents—cutters who maintain regular occupations aboveground (some legal, some not) and act as contacts for those in need of Nowhere. There's no way for a body to identify or find them. Instead, these agents keep an eye on the chant and approach those they think fit the profile. The agents judge potential members by three criteria: how badly the subject needs a safe haven, how trustworthy the subject will be with the secret of Nowhere, and how much he can pay for his safety. Cutters who satisfy an agent in these three categories are approached and “interviewed.” If the fugitive seems acceptable, the agent offers to guide him to Nowhere. By way of warning, the agent reveals the one major commitment of all guests of Nowhere: Those who attempt to reveal any of the secrets of the haven suddenly disappear—forever.

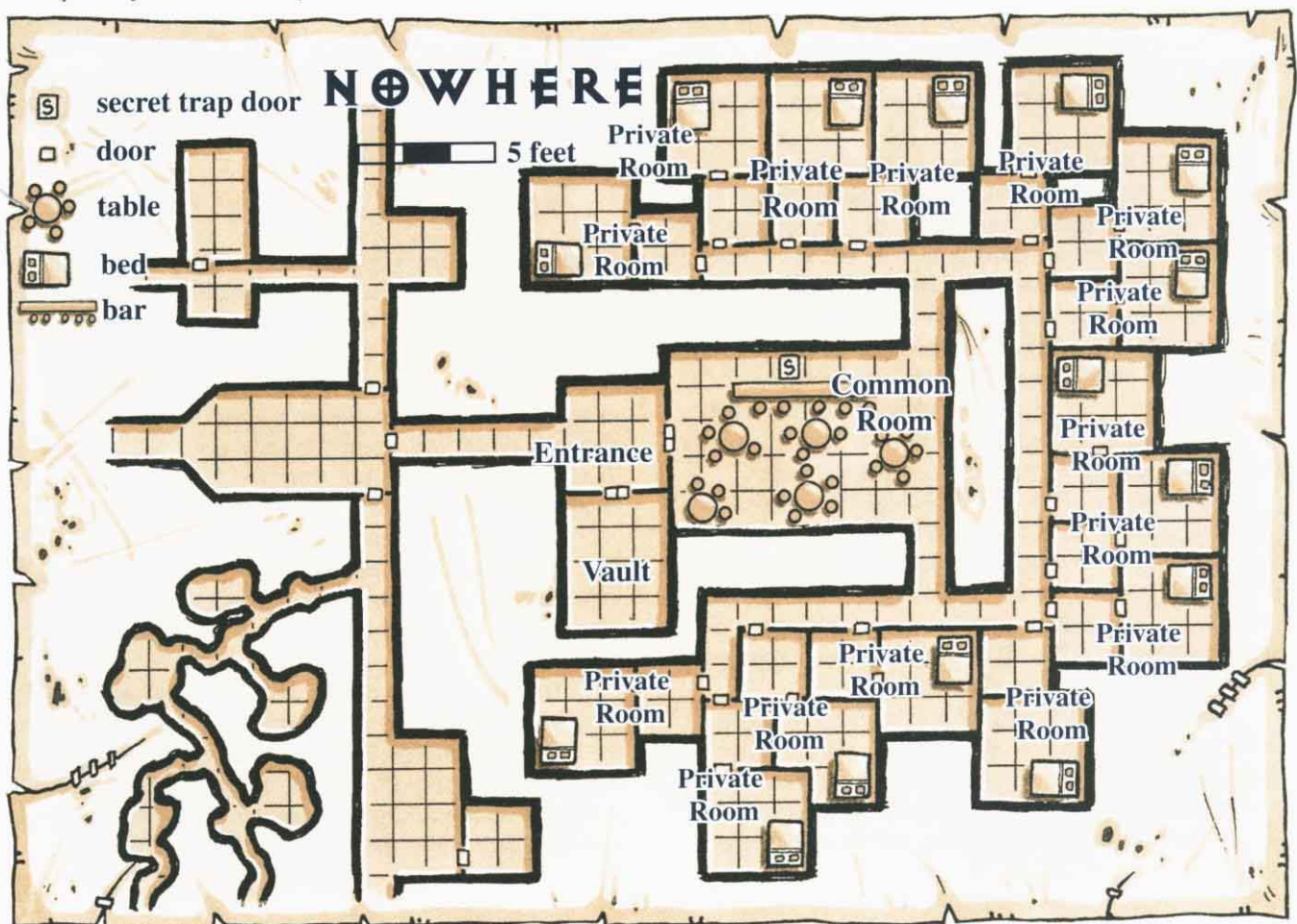
Chant has it that entering Nowhere costs 10,000 gp. Beyond that, the price is negotiable depending on how long a blood wants to stay. Once a guest leaves, however, he can never come back. This rule exists to discourage folks from attempting to come and go as they please, treating Nowhere like a vacation getaway.

The magic which protects Nowhere allows those who know its secrets (the agent/guides and the doormen, as well as the Twelve) to travel to and from the place, although it's not a simple journey even for them. Guests brought down by a guide can pay as close attention as they want, but they can't possibly remember the path. The guides use many dif-

ferent entrances and exits to the catacombs and follow long and circuitous routes before accessing the secret path that separates Nowhere from the rest of UnderSigil.

The PCs' guide will be Neidor Breg, who they meet in Dim Home. Some might consider Neidor a complete barmy. Somehow, though, he's reached a position of power and so folks have to tolerate him. Neidor believes himself to be a vampire. He avoids the light, always skulking in the shadows. His teeth are filed to resemble fangs, and he wears nothing but black—particularly a flowing (but usually dirty) black cape. Neidor even enjoys drinking blood, although he certainly doesn't need it to survive—he's no more undead than any other berk on the street. (He hides the fact that he needs food and his other mortal human qualities.)

Neidor plays the part of the angst-ridden, tortured soul “driven to evil by a need stronger than any mortal will.” Really, he's just a little barmy, a little self-absorbed, and terribly unsociable. He leads folks to Nowhere for the Twelve, whom he refers to as the Dark Powers (although they have nothing to do with the beings of the Demiplane of Dread). He talks incessantly about his terrible curse and warns his charges to beware coming too close lest the bloodlust overcome him. The only thing that might actually overcome someone coming too close is the smell of Neidor's unwashed form, but canny bashers won't question his beliefs if they want him to guide them to Nowhere.



NEIDOR BREG, NOWHERE GUIDE (Pl/♂ human/F6/DUSTMEN/CN): AC 8 (leather armor); MV 12; hp 41; THACO 15 (13 with short sword); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+2 (*short sword +1*, Str bonus); SD undead will not attack him; SZ M (5' 11' tall); ML steady (11); XP 420.

S 17, D 9, C 15, I 12, W 8, Ch 7.

Special Equipment: *short sword +1* (Sigil forged), *dust of disappearance* (5 applications).

THE LAYOUT

ENTRANCE. Nowhere doesn't need guards. However, it does have a doorman—three, in fact, each of whom works a 12-hour shift. They don't live in Nowhere, and so they know the way in and out—in fact, all three were former guides themselves.

Weapons and spell components are forbidden in Nowhere. The doorman relieves guests of any such items and tosses them into the Vault, carefully cataloging each object in the event that their owners eventually choose to leave.

Fools attempting to leave Nowhere on their own find themselves hopelessly lost in the catacombs, probably forever. The doormen don't attempt to stop people from leaving (this isn't a prison), but they do warn them that no one can find their way out alone. Attempts to follow a guide or a doorman out secretly have always failed.

VAULT. Guests of Nowhere store their weapons and spell components here by order of the doorman. They're welcome to put other valuables or magical items here as well, as they most likely won't need them during their stay. The vault is locked at all times and resistant to all magic short of a *wish*.

COMMON ROOM. Resembling a Cager tavern, this area usually has a quiet, somewhat dour atmosphere. Fighting's not prohibited and occasionally a tussle erupts (the tension can become quite high among those in hiding), but since there're no weapons or spells allowed here, the brawls aren't serious. Any action that might truly harm or negatively affect a resident of Nowhere cannot succeed—such is the power of the magical wards placed by the Twelve. This is true even of *charm* magic or other seemingly peaceful actions. There's just no loophole to be found here. Even a Guvner couldn't figure a way past the wards protecting the residents.

Gregin Peeryeye (Pl/♂ half-elf/F4/Sign of One/NG) works as the barkeep and lives in Nowhere full time. However, if he's a fugitive like everyone else, no one knows the dark of it.

PRIVATE ROOMS. Each guest of Nowhere has his or her own private chamber. Folks find them very comfortable, which is good since they spend a lot of time there.

Guests have the luxury of asking for various items (books, newspapers, games, special food, and so on) to be brought to them from the city above. The agents of the Twelve procure these items and bring them down on their next trip. The agents, of course, must be reimbursed for any expense.

THE CLIENTELE

Most of the bashers who come to Nowhere stay on a temporary basis—a few months, a year or two—until “things cool down.” A few, however, have no intention of ever leaving. It's their own personal prison, a cage in the Cage, but it beats dying. Probably.

Oldest of the current guests, Durrogh Black's (Pr/♂ human/F12/Athar/CN) been here the longest. Chant around the Common Room says Durrogh offended a power—some say Zeus, some say Odin. They say that if Durrogh ever left Nowhere, the power's agents'd cut him to ribbons before he took his first smoggy breath. He's a tough old coot, cynical and embittered, but not entirely without a sense of humor.

Radassa Femio (Pl/♀ githzerai/T8/Dustmen/NE), a fairly recent addition to the guest list, keeps her bone-box shut, particularly in regard to why she's here. Whatever the reason, it's seemingly so terrible that she's not sure even Nowhere is safe enough. She trusts no one.

Unlike Radassa, Kiim Madbone (Pl/♂ tiefling/F5,T6/Transcendent Order/N) happily tells anyone who wants to listen why he's in Nowhere and why he'll never leave. He claims that members of the Revolutionary League framed him for the murder of two Mercykiller factors about six years ago. The Red Death (not surprisingly) wants justice and vengeance and has put him on their most-wanted list. To add insult to injury, those same Anarchists pinned a number of other crimes against the Guvners on him once the Mercykiller Justiciars began their manhunt. Now, whether Kiim's tale holds any truth is a matter for each listener to decide.

THE DARK OF THE TWELVE

The guarantee offered by the Twelve that no one finds folks who come to Nowhere isn't screed. Whatever the protections around the place, it'd take a true power to penetrate them, and gods can't enter the Cage. 'Course, the Lady of Pain almost certainly knows where Nowhere is, but she's got no reason to care—and the Twelve'd never be so addled to let someone on the run from the Lady come to their haven. (Besides, those on the run from the Lady don't last long enough to be approached by an agent in the first place.)

No spell, no psionic power, and no special skill can find Nowhere. The place cannot be scried, detected, or entered magically or psionically. The protections are fool-proof—that's why the Twelve can ask the price they do and actually get it.

The Twelve themselves dwell in a secret set of chambers below the main level of Nowhere. A secret door below the bar in the Common Room leads there, but no one uses it and only the barkeep even knows about it. The Twelve never personally communicate with anyone, not even the doormen, the barkeep, or the contacting agents. If they need to

speak with someone, they do so by way of some sort of unknown mental communication device.

No one knows anything else about them.

◆ THE FLOW OF EVENTS ◆

The course through the crypts and the sewers should prove fairly easy to experienced adventurers. It may take anywhere from one to three days of wandering through the Realm Below in order to find Dim Home. The PCs'll likely come upon some darkers who—if treated with respect and offered fair garnish—bring them to the underground hideaway.

Neidor Breg spends a good deal of his time in Dim Home because he and Fion are lovers. A visitor can find him in her chamber or in the Dark Court. Fion's sisters don't care much for him, as he's a vile, crude individual. He likes Dim Home as he's a "creature of the dark" himself.

Convincing him to guide them to Nowhere, even if they've got the money to pay, remains a difficult task. See, this isn't the way it's supposed to work. Neidor's supposed to keep his eyes peeled and his ears parked to the chant to find those who have need of Nowhere, and *he's* supposed to approach *them*. "Besides," he says, "this is my time off." Going along with the screed about him being a vampire's a must if the PCs wish to deal with him. Further, they'll have to convince him of their great need in these special circumstances. They've got to pretend that they're looking for sanctuary, though—any addle-cove stating that he needs to find one of the haven's residents won't ever convince a guide to take him there. (It wouldn't be much of a sanctuary if that worked.) Fortunately, Driel and Nios might help the PCs, since they're always anxious for the barmy to leave.

If the PCs search for Vadelisu on their own (without prompting or patronage by some high-up), they'll need to come up with the entrance fee to Nowhere on their own. Ten thousand gold pieces *each* is an incredible amount of jink. They may decide to send only one person there—if they can even afford that. DMs should be willing to provide sources of cash such as a lending house or faction funds so that the PCs won't be unable to reach their goal simply because they don't have enough money. Note that the treasure in the roper's lair and goods from the rest of the Nontegue mansion may help at least somewhat with this problem.

Once in Nowhere, it's obvious that fighting's not possible—the Twelve see to that. See, Nowhere really is the ultimate sanctuary, and even if folks manage to lie their way in (like the PCs have done), they still can't do anything to harm one of the residents. They can, at least, talk to Vadelisu.

VADELISU'S DECISION

Vadelisu hasn't been in Nowhere for more than a couple of weeks. The residents've heard the chant about the faction

war, but for the most part they remain relatively detached with the self-absorption of all fugitives. Not so for Vadelisu, however. In the time he's spent here, he's tumbled to the fact that the Sigil spell is powered by belief—that's why it's so potent. Thus, Vadelisu's come to the conclusion that the politics of the war aren't what's important, but the beliefs involved. The wizard's decided that he's going to leave the haven within just a day or two so that he can return to the surface and cast the spell. He's also decided that he wants to use the power of the magic to bring the faction war to an end.

Giving victory to the Bleak Cabal.

See, despite the fact that politically, the Harmonium, the Guvners, and the Mercykillers enforce the laws in Sigil, Vadelisu believes that the Bleakers really have the most beneficial belief system. Even though he himself has been a Sensate namer for years, he knows that the Society of Sensation has no business being in control or in power; the fac-

tion's beliefs have little to do with benefiting the majority of people and deal instead with things on a very individualized level. Since

political power and ruling all of

Sigil seem to be what the

faction war is really

about, he's chosen the

Bleakers—with their com-

passionate way of helping

the downtrodden—as the best

choice for coming out the victors in

the war. He knows that the Bleakers aren't really involved in the fighting and that even if they were they probably wouldn't be on the same side as the Sensates, but that no longer matters to him. "That's just about politics, not belief," he says. He recognizes the benefits of law and order and having the Guvners and the Hardheads maintain them, but he believes that the Bleak Cabal are most likely to help the most people if they end up on top of things—and it's that belief which he plans to use to fuel the Sigil spell.

Now, if the PCs happen to sympathize with Vadelisu's leanings or twig to the Bleak Cabal's ideals in general, they'll most likely be happy to hear his decision. They'll probably even offer their aid. If they don't agree, however, there's nothing that they can do about it here in Nowhere except try to convince him otherwise. This can lead to some interesting discussions, and well-spoken bloods might even cause Vadelisu to hesitate longer and question his beliefs, but ultimately his mind is set in stone.

VADELISU (Pl/♂ HUMAN/M12/SOCIETY OF SENSATION/N): AC 4 (*bracers, cloak*); MV 12; hp 30; THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (staff); SD +1 to surprise rolls and saving throws vs. poison; SZ M (5'10" tall); ML elite (13); XP 5,000.

Notes: Throughout most of his life, Vadelisu has been quiet and reserved, keeping his feelings to himself. He studied magic to provide himself with a means of income that involved

WELL,
IF YOU COULD
PICK ONE FACTION
+ COME OUT + EN + OP,
WHO WOULD YOU CHOOSE?
—VADELISU

a great deal of time for himself. Some folks might call Vadelisu a “deep thinker.” Despite his introspective and contemplative nature, he never gave much thought to the factions, despite having joined the Sensates. Frail and bookish, Vadelisu nevertheless has a strong stubborn streak that displays itself once he’s twigged to an idea.

S 9, D 14, C 10, I 17, W 14, Ch 12.

Special Equipment: bracers of defense AC 4, cloak of displacement (–2 to AC, +2 to saves), wand of frost (21 charges).

Spells (4,4,4,4,4,1): 1st—*magic missile* (×2), *read magic*, *shield*; 2nd—*blur*, *invisibility*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *web*; 3rd—*dispel magic*, *fireball*, *fly*, *lightning bolt*; 4th—*confusion*, *dimension door*, *fear*, *stoneskin*; 5th—*advanced illusion*, *cloudkill*, *passwall*, *wall of iron*; 6th—*globe of invulnerability*.

AN IMPOR+AN+ CLUE

If the PCs speak at all with the talkative Kiim Madbone in Nowhere, he’ll certainly “name-drop” the fact that not long ago he met the editor of the *Factol’s Manifesto*, who hid in Nowhere a while. Because of the dream at the very beginning of the adventure (engineered through the Nightmare Shaft), this should definitely arouse the attentions of the PCs. If they inquire further, Kiim admits that he doesn’t remember the basher’s name or really even much of what he looked like. He’ll agree that this is a little odd, but he will show the PCs a quill pen given him by the editor.

The pen, Kiim explains, holds an enchantment (a particularly powerful version of the *succor* spell, but he doesn’t know that) that’ll take up to six people right to wherever the editor is, once it’s activated. “The editor gave it to me in case I ever want to leave here, so’s I can look him up. Unfortunately, I don’t think that’s *ever* going to happen.”

At this point, the PCs might think to inform Kiim of recent events in Sigil—like the splintering of the Mercykillers and the determination of the Sons of Mercy to eliminate all false charges from the Guvners’ logs. This news delights him, and he gives the heroes the pen in gratitude. Even the hope of being able to someday leave Nowhere is more than he’s had in a long, long time.

To activate the object, they have to break the pen as they speak the command word. “And there’s the trick,” Kiim says, “‘cause he didn’t tell me the word—just that it’s the last word on the second page of his book.”

The command word is “glittering.” However, unless the PCs have a copy of the *Factol’s Manifesto* with them, it’s unlikely that they’ll have access to that knowledge in Nowhere. Besides, they have more pressing concerns with Vadelisu. Events concerning their eventual use of the *succor* object are detailed in Act VI: The Unity of Rings.

THE PLAYER CHARACTERS’ DECISION

The choice that the PCs make—whether to aid Vadelisu or stop him—directs the course of the rest of the adventure. If the PCs join Vadelisu and leave Nowhere when he does, they’ll all be escorted back to the surface of Sigil’s streets.

At that point, the heroes’ll become minders for the wizard, since others search for him too.

Specifically, a group of warriors from the opposing side of the conflict from the PCs—assuming they’re working for a high-up of one side or the other—tracks them down and attempts to scrag both the scroll and the wizard. Use the statistics from Act II: The Battle at the Armory for the warriors and assume that two opponents for each PC (plus two for Vadelisu) make the attack.

If the PCs aren’t working for a particular side, it’s a safe bet that both sides have cutters looking for Vadelisu and the scroll. Either or both could attempt to interfere—particularly those of the Harmonium and allied forces once they learn that the wizard plans to use the spell against them (in a manner of speaking).

A DM may also wish to have other forces intervene. Shemeshka the Marauder’s an obvious choice, since she already knows so much of the dark involved and would like to get her hands on the scroll itself. Thuemos Diaret and the Knights of Dark House know enough to be troublesome. Other powerful enemies that the PCs have encountered in adventures prior to the faction war might also have tumbled to the dark of the Sigil spell and desire its power for themselves.

It takes an hour for Vadelisu to cast the spell. His path through the streets (exposed in the open) may be fraught with peril and threats from beginning to end. He’ll be too busy casting the spell to do much except protect himself from immediate harm, so the PCs bear the responsibility of warding off threats.

If the PCs oppose Vadelisu, he attempts to leave without their knowing. Even if they spot him giving the place the laugh, the doorman of Nowhere won’t let a single guide escort two groups hostile to one another out of the place. The PCs have to wait for a second agent to guide them and then catch up with Vadelisu aboveground.

In this case, the PCs are among those attempting to stop Vadelisu. However, as soon as supporters of the Anarchist/Xaositect/Indep side appear, the wizard enlists their help. Thus, the PCs need to overcome them as well as stop the wizard from casting the spell.

THE SPELL

No matter what the PCs do, Vadelisu goes to the Clerk’s Ward to cast the spell right away. He travels about the streets of that ward in a specific pattern outlined in the scroll. The procedure takes about an hour. He’ll use all of the protective spells and

items at his disposal to keep from being found or interrupted.

The DM shouldn't forget that the streets of the Clerk's Ward, while not as busy as normal due to folks' fear and the battles of the faction war, still hold plenty of bystanders. Some of them might become involved if they see an apparently defenseless man attacked by what might appear to be a group of thugs (the PCs or whoever opposes Vadelisu). Likewise, others might not trust the look of some wizard walking about the street muttering what could be a foul incantation.

If someone else gets hold of the scroll, Vadelisu can still cast the Sigil spell, for he's memorized the rituals and actions needed to use it. A reader must spend at least a week studying the strange enchantments of the scroll (utilizing one *read magic* spell each day) to learn to utilize the spell. Due to its unique nature, the Sigil spell does not need to be memorized like a standard spell—but the scroll itself is needed for reference unless the wizard spends at least three weeks memorizing it as Vadelisu has.

In any event, after all the activities of both sides, Vadelisu walks the hidden pattern and casts the Sigil spell. Onlookers hold their breaths, waiting for the city around them to change.

Nothing happens.

Vadelisu stands bewildered and crestfallen, unable to determine what went wrong. What he couldn't possibly have

known, however, is that the Labyrinth Stone, held now by Alluvius Ruskin, is needed to activate the spell since it holds the essence of the ancient wizard who created and placed the spell to begin with. The PCs tumble to this fact in the following chapter, after putting all the pieces together.

◆ AFTERMATH ◆

If Vadelisu survives the whole ordeal, he flees the scene and disappears into the Cage, most likely never heard from again. He can't bear the disappointment and the disgrace.

In fact, all concerned simply go home. The whole thing was a waste of time, apparently.

Or was it? There must be something to all of this, right? The PCs, at this point, should suspect that not everything is as simple as it appeared. Shemeshka's message in Act III mentioned more than just the Sigil spell. It also mentioned a gem and Alluvius Ruskin. While Vadelisu might not have any further interest in these events, the secret to ending the war might still be within the grasp of those who persist in following up every last clue.

'Course, unfortunately, the PCs have learned of the existence of the ultimate haven—and now can never utilize that knowledge, for like all who leave Nowhere, they can't return. Hopefully, they'll never have need of its protection.



The graybeards pat us on the heads and tell us that the Lady moves in mysterious ways. And I always ask them: mysterious to whom? What they mean is that they can't explain why she flays one troublemaker but not another, or why

ACT VI: THE UNITY OF RINGS

she does not raze the buildings where conspirators meet, or why she allows a threat to grow unchecked rather than snuff it in its infancy. But I tell you: The Lady is no Xaositect, blown by the winds of whimsy. Her every action

is measured and precise, occurring at a particular moment in time for a particular reason, a link in a cosmic chain of events that we cannot—or will not—see.

—Aisal gor'Dan, Cause and Effect

◆ THE STORY SO FAR ◆

Up to this point in the game, the player characters have jumped (or been dragged) into a number of scenarios related to the sprawling faction war, but they probably feel like cranium rats running in a wheel—they're struggling without really getting anywhere. Sure, they may have helped decide the Battle at the Armory, or tumbled to the dark of the apocalyptic Eschaton, or shut down the yugoloths' dreaded Nightmare Shaft, or even followed the wizard Vadelisu out of Nowhere and watched him try to cast the Sigil spell. But nothing they've done has helped to calm the war; it still rages around them, seemingly growing worse by the hour.

In this concluding chapter, the heroes finally get a chance to follow up on the clues they hopefully uncovered during the previous chapters. They know about the existence of the Sigil spell. They know that Vadelisu tried and failed to use it to end the war. They know that Alluvius Ruskin, proprietor of Tivvum's Antiquities, possesses a gem that's somehow tied to the hidden spell. They've heard a few references to an old barmy locked up at the Gatehouse, though his role (if any) is a mystery. They know that the shadowy editor of the *Factol's Manifesto* may understand more of the puzzle. And they finally have a means of contacting the blood.

That's where Act VI begins: when the PCs use the quill pen they obtained from Kiim Madbone. The chapter doesn't present encounters specifically based on the events of the war, but the DM should introduce faction tensions, berks who're piked off because the portals are closed, folks in fear of the fiends now trapped in Sigil, and so on. The PCs may focus on their goals, but they shouldn't be allowed to forget the chaos that's gripped the Cage.

◆ DEEP THROAT ◆

The pen has been enchanted with a special version of *succor* and can teleport up to six bashers to the location of the editor. As Kiim noted, the command word to activate the pen is the last word on the second page of the *Factol's Manifesto*. The PCs aren't likely to carry a copy of the banned book around with them, so they'll probably have to search one out. Almost any bookshop in the Cage that's well stocked and independent (in other words, not affiliated with any faction) can procure the tome, though it might take a day or two and cost as much as 500 gp—most store owners want a hefty garnish for breaking the law.

SØRRY,
BU+ I DØN'+ SELL
ILLEGAL BØØKS—
NØ+ FØR +HAT PRICE,
ANYWAY.
—CUESI KAHL,
ØWNER ØF +HE
BINDINGS BØØKSHØP

Once the heroes get the book, they find that the last word on the second page is "glittering." (If the DM owns the actual PLANESCAPE sourcebook, he can hand it to the players and let them find the word themselves.) Each PC who wants to visit the editor must speak the command word while one of them breaks the pen.

REVELATIONS

The cutters who activate the *succor* spell suffer through a moment of extreme nauseous disorientation and suddenly find themselves in what looks like a lavishly decorated bedroom suitable for a perfumed nobleman. On one wall is a carved oak door that opens to a tiny linen closet; on another is a gold-leaf door that looks like it leads to another room. The chamber's full of fascinating but ultimately useless objects, and any PC who pokes around for a few minutes and makes a successful Intelligence check realizes that the room doesn't seem to be used much. The fancy dresser drawers are empty, cobwebs grow in the corners of the arched ceiling, and there's a thin layer of dust on the ruffled pillows.

Truth is, the room *isn't* used at all—not as a bedchamber, anyway. It's a receiving room for anyone who's given the power to visit the secretive editor. The blood hopes it'll help to mask his real identity. In this case, however, the editor knew that the PCs were coming, and he doesn't care if they find out who he is. Thus, as a clue to the canny, he purposefully let the bedroom appear unused. Fact is, the editor gave the PCs another clue earlier in the adventure, when he sent them a dream message through the Nightmare Shaft. Yep: The editor of the *Factol's Manifesto* is none other than A'kin the arcanaloth, and the opulent bedchamber is actually on the top floor of an abandoned kip in the Lower Ward.

Why'd he bother to research, write, and publish such an inflammatory book? Quite simply, because it amused him to do so. A'kin loved watching the factions cower and bluster and threaten when they saw their secrets exposed. He loved creating the persona of a tireless, self-sacrificing crusader for truth. And he *especially* loved fingering the pompous Shemeshka the Marauder as an informant, even though she hadn't helped him a bit—the two don't exactly get along. A'kin takes great delight in fouling up her schemes whenever possible.

That's why he contacted the PCs through the Nightmare Shaft and set them on the trail of "the editor" in the first place. The fiend wants to tell them a bit of the dark so that they might master the hidden Sigil spell before Shemeshka does. 'Course, he didn't want to make it too easy on the sods, so he let 'em look all over for awhile first, knowing they'd eventually find a way to reach him.

DM NOTE: Since the *Factol's Manifesto* was written by a yugoloth, does that mean some or all of the book's information should be considered suspect? That's up for each DM to decide.



HINTS AND GAMES

Through the gold-leaf door is a small room in which A'kin waits for the cutters. However, the fiend enjoys playing mind games, so he's taken a few steps to hide his true identity. He's cloaked the entire room in *continual darkness*, he's *polymorphed* himself into the form of an NPC well known to the group (DM's choice), and he's made himself invisible. Canny heroes will be able to penetrate each of those defenses in turn, if they choose to do so. For example, *light* or *continual light* will banish the darkness, *dispel magic* can restore A'kin's true form, a handful of dust will make him visible, and so on.

Remember, though, that the fiend doesn't care if the PCs see through his half-hearted disguises. Fact is, he hopes they will. If they do, he'll even reveal the dark of his motivations and his use of the Nightmare Shaft.

On the other hand, if the heroes aren't able to break through the fiend's disguise, or if they don't even try, he continues to maintain his pretense. He's a bit disappointed, but under no circumstances will A'kin reveal himself on his own. He wants the sods to earn it, to feel as if they've cracked his best defenses (even though they haven't). It's all part of the game.

In speaking with the PCs, A'kin will entertain a generous number of questions about the *Factol's Manifesto* and other subjects, though—surprise!—his answers won't necessarily be truthful. Eventually, the fiend insists that the heroes listen to what he has to tell them about the Sigil spell:

"Great magic lies sleeping in the veins of Sigil. With a word, it can yet be yours. The wizard Vadelisu tried to summon it, but he lacked the crucial element. Only the oldest barmy in the Gatehouse knows the dark of it, for it is something that he lost long ago. Go and walk the halls of madness. Seek out Gifad."

It's important to note that this is the only relevant hint that A'kin will give the heroes. He won't tell them any more secrets about the war, Rowan Darkwood's schemes, the Sigil spell, the Labyrinth Stone, or anything else about what's really going in. The fiend knows some of the dark, but he's not going to hand it to the PCs on a silver platter. He feels he's done more than enough.

When he's ready for the heroes to leave, A'kin instructs them to return to the bedchamber, pull a feather out of one of the ruffled pillows, and step into the small linen closet. The feather acts as a key to a portal formed by the closet

doorway, which sends the PCs to the storeroom of the Styx Oarsman, a fiendish tavern elsewhere in the Lower Ward. (The portal isn't affected by the Lady's ban because its destination lies within the Cage.)

If the PCs attack A'kin at any point during the encounter (whether they've discovered his true identity or not), the fiend tries to put them in their place—without hurting them too badly. If that fails, he disparages their stupidity and teleports to his shop. The sword-happy berks'll have to figure out the closet portal by themselves or provide their own exit.

A'KIN (Pl/♂ ARCANALOTH/HD 12+24/NE): AC -8; MV 12, Fl 18 (B); hp 92; THACO 7; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/2d6 (claw/claw/bite); SA spells, poison; SD +3 or better weapons to hit, immunities; SW cold; MR 60%; SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (16); Int supra-genius (19); XP 20,000.

Notes: A'kin can read and write all known languages.

SA—has spells as a 12th-level mage (see below); poisonous claw attacks inflict cumulative, permanent -1 penalty on foe's attack roll unless negated by *bless*, *neutralize poison*, or *slow poison*.

SD—immune to mind-affecting spells; immune to acid, fire, iron weapons, or poison; half damage from gas; 19 Intelligence grants immunity to 1st-level illusions.

SW—double damage from cold.

Spells (4/4/4/4/1): 1st—*audible glamer*, *hypnotism*, *protection from good*, *sleep*; 2nd—*ESP*, *forget*, *mirror image*, *stinking cloud*; 3rd—*dispel magic*, *misfortune* (described in *Planewalker's Handbook*), *vampiric touch*, *wraithform*; 4th—*confusion*, *contagion*, *polymorph self*, *vrock's screech* (described in *Planewalker's Handbook*); 5th—*avoidance*, *cloudkill*, *domination*, *feeblemind*; 6th—*death fog*.

Spell-like abilities (1/round, at will, unless noted): *advanced illusion* (1/day), *alter self*, *animate dead*, *cause disease* (reverse of *cure disease*), *charm person*, *continual darkness*, *control temperature* (10' radius), *fear* (1/day), *fly* (unlimited duration), *gate* (1/day; 1d6 mezzoloths, 1d2 dergholoths, or 1 arcanaloth; 40% chance), *heat metal*, *improved phantasmal force*, *invisibility*, *magic missile*, *produce flame*, *shape change* (any humanoid form), *telekinesis*, *teleport without error*, and *warp wood*.

Special Equipment: cube of force, ring of spell turning.

◆ THE GATEHOUSE ◆

The Bleak Cabal's headquarters sits at the top of a small hill in the Hive Ward, at the end of a curving road known as Bedlam Run. The central part of the ghastly building is a tall, horned, hollow tower that curves until it nearly forms a circle. From it, four long, narrow wings jut outward like spokes: one houses the poor, one's for barmy Bleakers, a third holds the criminally or irretrievably insane, and the last is for orphans and the only slightly mad.

On an average day, hundreds of sods wait in line at the central tower to commit themselves or a loved one, drop off abandoned children, or just beg a place to flop for a few days. Thanks to the faction war, though, what's normally a crowd has become a riot. Staggering numbers of the newly mad, orphaned, and hungry plead for entrance—as do plenty of bashers looking for a place to hide from the battles that ravage the streets daily.

If the PCs follow the Bleak Cabal's rules and wait in what passes for a line, it takes 'em almost a full day (and a harrowing one, at that) to reach the admitting clerks in the central tower. Canny cutters might pay off those at the front of the line to switch places or use the influence of a Bleaker PC to get in faster. But they shouldn't try to push through the mob unless they're prepared to fight many hundreds of furious bashers—many of whom are tough, barmy, or both.

When the heroes finally reach the admitting area, they're greeted by a bladeling named Negue, one of several Anarchist spies who've infiltrated the Bleakers to cause as much havoc as possible—and punish them for refusing to join the faction war. Negue pretends to be appalled that the PCs want to waste the faction's time by visiting some old barmy when the Bleakers have their

hands full with the needy masses out front. Garnish won't help, so the PCs must spin a good tale (and quickly, too) to change Negue's mind. Promising that their actions will alleviate the suffering of innocents is a good idea, but truth is, the bladeling accepts just about anything the heroes dream up. See, he's tired of "line duty" and wants to get back inside the Gatehouse, anyway—the Anarchists have planned a major disruption, and Negue must be in place to carry out his end.

Negue gets a Bleaker to cover for him, digs through cabinets in a nearby office, and returns with Gifad's file. It mentions his erratic divination skill and describes the disturbing "treatments" he's endured over the years. The records only go back 100 years, but a handwritten note from then-Factol Tollysalmon remarks that Gifad was thought to be the oldest barmy in the Gatehouse—and one of the very first residents of the Criminally and Irretrievably Insane Wing. There's no mention of why he was locked up, though. That chant's lost to history, and besides, it's not important to the Bleakers.

DM NOTE: The *know faction* spell won't reveal that Negue's really an Anarchist; the canny spy plays his role too well.



THE HALLS OF MADNESS

Refer to the map of the Criminally and Irretrievably Insane Wing on this page. The wing is a narrow rectangle with two poorly torchlit floors, each filled with the bloodcurdling howls and gibbering cries of the inmates. Bleaker chambers sit in the corners of each floor, and about 40 tiny cells (5 feet by 15 feet) line each long wall. A spiral staircase at the far end connects the two stories.

A. MAIN DOORS: Two imposing iron doors, each with multiple locks, lead into the wing. A portcullis hangs above the doors, though it's concealed behind a large tapestry. Hidden behind a secret panel in the wall nearby is a crank to raise and lower the portcullis.

B. SHIFTER CELLS: These cells are like the rest, except that top-shelf Bleaker mages have modified them to hold barmies with innate plane-shifting powers.

C. LARGE CELLS: To accommodate larger inmates (like bariaur), the Bleakers knocked through every other wall between these cells, making each area twice as big.

D. OFFICE: These two rooms serve as small administrative offices for Bleakers on duty in the wing. They contain cabinets full of reports on the inmates, rows of cell keys hang-

ing on pegs, schedules of treatments, and so on. In the office on the top floor, a secret wall panel hides a crank that can raise or lower the portcullis over the doors below.

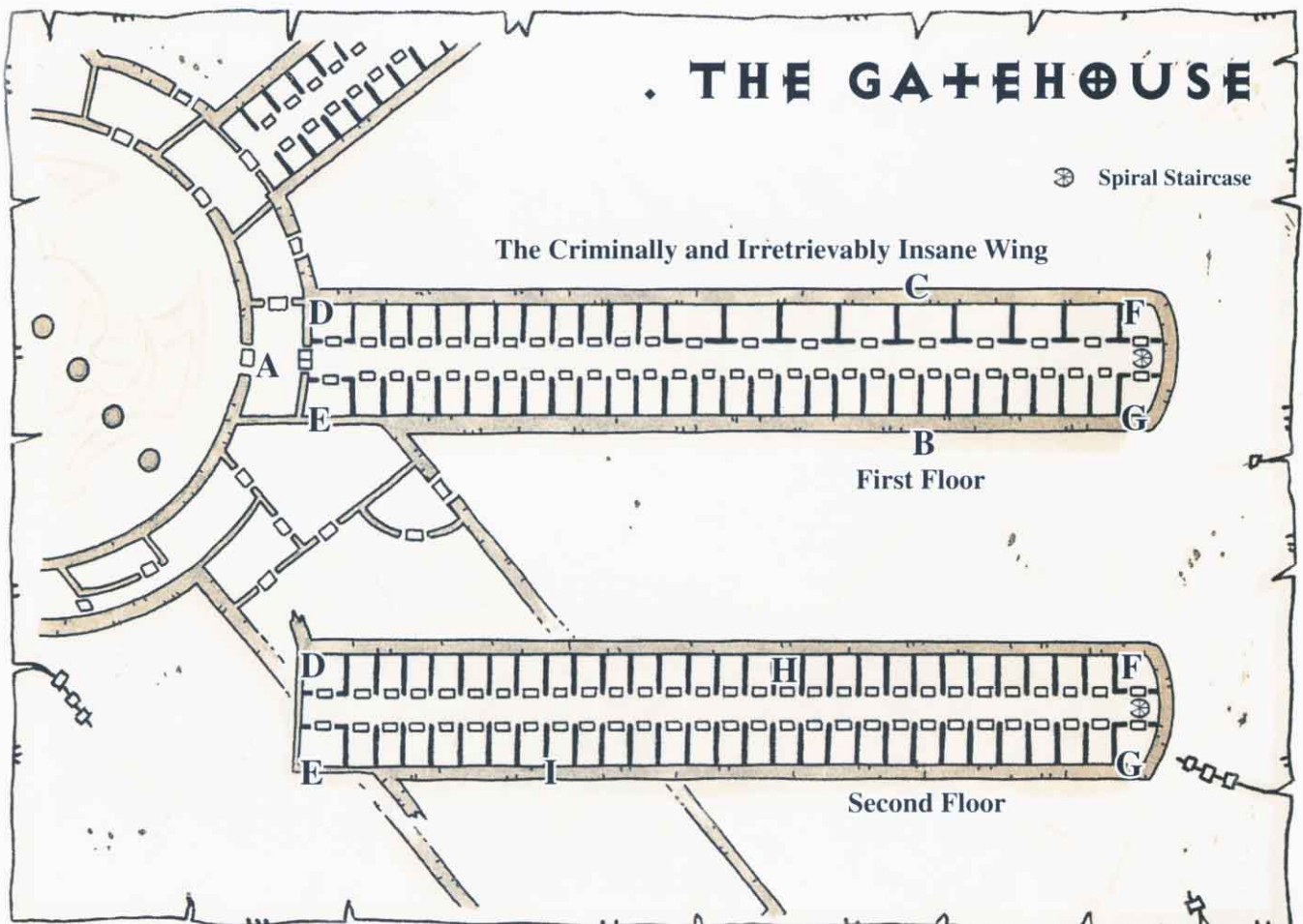
E. STOREROOM: The Bleakers store all manner of equipment in these two chambers: mops, buckets, rags, ropes, torches, oil, chains, and so on.

F. KITCHEN: In these rooms, the Bleakers prepare meals for themselves and the inmates. They contain pantries of simple food, stacks of metal trays, harmless utensils (mostly spoons) a small oven or two, jugs of water and ale, and so on. Currently, two Bleakers on duty prepare food in the kitchen on the top floor.

G. COT ROOM: The Bleakers on duty in the wing sleep in shifts in these rooms. The two bashers in the kitchen have stored their personal possessions in the cot room on the top floor.

H. LUB'S CELL: For the past 60 years, this cramped, dingy cell has been the home of an elderly male tiefling named Lub. He has no useful chant, but he loves to flap his bone-box to anyone who comes near.

I. GIFAD'S CELL: In this cell sits Gifad, the ancient barmy once known as Rowan Darkwood. When the PCs enter the wing, he's sound asleep on the cold stone floor.



Negue unlocks the imposing main doors (A), leads the party inside, and closes but does not lock the doors behind him. While in the wing, the bladeling awaits a signal from his fellow Anarchists, at which time he'll begin opening cell doors and setting the barmies free. In preparation, he does whatever he can to put the PCs in a spot where they won't be able to stop him—or at least, not right away. Thus, he takes them up to the second floor and to what he claims is Gifad's cell (H), which actually houses Lub. The sod happily pretends to be the one the PCs seek, and he makes up whatever he thinks they want to hear, babbling excitedly about whatever pops into his demented mind.

While the PCs question the insane tiefling, Negue finally receives his signal: fireworks begin exploding outside. He heads downstairs "to dig up more information on Gifad," and once he reaches the first floor, he uses his stolen ring of keys to open cell doors, one per round. But the wing's overcrowded, and about half the cells contain two barmies. Thus, the DM should roll 1d6 each round, with an even result meaning that one barmy is freed, and an odd result meaning two.

Negue plans to release as many inmates as he can until he's caught or put in the dead-book. If spotted, he'll pretend to be innocent for as long as he can get away with it, slyly opening more doors all the while. He'll even try to lock the PCs inside a cell if the opportunity presents itself.

Eight rounds after Negue begins unlocking doors, any PCs on the second floor should make Wisdom checks at -2 to see if they notice the increased noise from below (the penalty is due to Lub's loud babbling, the screaming barmies nearby, and the exploding fireworks). Each round thereafter, the cutters should make another check, adding a cumulative +1 bonus to their rolls (due to the rising commotion). If the PCs haven't tumbled to the dark of it after 12 rounds, some of the freed barmies scamper up to the second floor, where they'll quickly be noticed.

Once freed, a few of the inmates flee through the unlocked main doors, but most just run around in the wing, the only home they've known for a long while. Some curl up

in a corner and weep. Some ransack the corner chambers for anything they can find (including keys to unlock more cells). Some extinguish the wall torches, making it significantly darker, or try to set things on fire. Many unleash their pent-up energy and fury on everything they see—themselves, each other, the PCs, Negue, the walls, their invisible friends, and so on. Note that racial hatreds still apply; githzerai and githyanki concentrate their attacks on each other.

NEGUE (PL/3 BLADELING/HD 6/REVOLUTIONARY LEAGUE/CN): AC 2; MV 12; hp 38; THACO 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1d6/1d6 (metal-encrusted fists); SA razor storm; SD immunities; SW double damage from heat metal; MR 10%; SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (16); XP 650.

Notes: Though most bladelings are LE or LN, Negue prefers the freedom of chaos. He carries no weapons, preferring to fight with his spiky fists.

SA—once per week, Negue can explode his outer skin, which hurls bladed shrapnel 15' forward and causes 3d12 points of damage to victims (save vs. breath weapon for half). Afterward, the AC of his frontal torso drops to 6 (any attacks to that area inflict double damage) and his MR falls to 5%.

SD—immune to acid, normal piercing weapons, bladed weapons, and spells that corrode metal; half damage from cold- and fire-based spells.

Special Equipment: ring of keys.

MAKING BARMIES

The DM should roll on the tables below to find each barmy's race, class, and level, then determine the THACO and hit points for the resulting madman. Mages have no spellbooks and thus no magic, but they still go through the motions of spellcasting and act as if their spells have worked. About 50% of the clerics have not yet been abandoned by their gods and can cast DM-selected spells.

In combat, the barmies use metal food trays left in their cells, jagged chunks of stone chipped from the walls, items taken from the corner chambers, or whatever innate abilities they possess.

D100	RACE	D100	CLASS	D100	LEVEL/BASE XP
01–25	Human	01–45	Fighter	01–30	1/35
26–40	Tiefling	46–55	Mage	31–50	2/65
41–55	Bariaur	56–75	Cleric	51–66	3/120
56–70	Githzerai	76–00	Thief	67–79	4/175
71–85	Githyanki			80–89	5/270
86–95	Demihuman			90–95	6/420
96–00	Rogue modron			96–00	7/650

HUMANS have no special powers.

TIEFLINGS have infravision 60 foot range, suffer half damage from cold, and cast *darkness* and either *chill touch*, *mirror image*, or *charm person* (all 1/day).

BARIAUR have infravision 60-foot range and butt for 1d8 damage (tripled if they charge 30 feet before butting);

GITHZERAI have infravision 60-foot range, have a Magic Resistance of 5% per level, and can *plane shift* (1/round), though 80% of the time they shift within the wing rather than escape from it.

GITHYANKI can also *plane shift* (1/round), though 80% of the time they, too, shift within the wing rather than escape from it.

DEMIHUMANS include elves, dwarves, gnomes, and halflings and have a wide variety of abilities, as detailed in the *Player's Handbook*.

ROGUE MODRONS have double the normal range of sight, 30% resistance to mind-affecting spells, and a natural Armor Class of 8.

AVERAGE BARMY: AC 10 (8 for modrons); MV 12; #AT 1; Dmg 1d2 (tray), 1d3 (stone), 1d3 (metal chain), 1d4 (lit torch), or 1d4 (sharp key); SA var; SD var; MR var; SZ M (4'-7' tall); ML fanatic (19); AL n/a; XP var.

Notes: The DM must determine the THACO and hit points of each barmy. Special abilities vary with race. Alignments don't matter, since each barmy acts in an unpredictable manner.

THE BLEAKER RESPONSE

While Negue begins freeing barmies, two Bleakers (Pl/♂ tiefling/0-level/N) busily prepare inmate meals in the kitchen on the top floor. They notice that the bladeling takes the PCs to Lub's cell, but they don't pay much attention—they think he's one of them. However, they drop what they're doing as soon as they realize what's happening. One Bleaker runs to the top-floor office to lower the portcullis at the main doors. The other telepathically alerts a high-up in the main tower to the danger, using a linked pair of *ioun stones* meant for communication. Then they seek out the PCs to find out what's going on.

Unfortunately, Anarchist spies in the other wings of the Gatehouse are all doing the same thing as Negue, and the Bleak Cabal finds itself hard pressed to deal with so much at once. Ten rounds after the warning is sent through the *ioun stones*, a group of 12 bashers raises the portcullis and enters the Criminally and Irretrievably Insane Wing to restore calm.

Once Negue and the barmies have been dealt with, the Bleakers express displeasure if the PCs put any of the freed inmates in the dead-book, arguing that the insane need care, not brutality. If the cutters tell the truth about what happened and show sincere concern for the poor barmies, they can win the Bleakers over—and at last be taken to see the real Gifad. (Before long, faction members compare notes and realize that statements made by each of the Anarchist spies

point the finger of blame squarely at the Revolutionary League.)

BLEAKER GUARDS (12): AC 6 (scale mail); MV 12; hp 26 each; THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (footman's mace); SA paralyzation; SD immune to madness-inducing magic; MR nil or 20%; SZ M (4-6' tall); ML average (10); XP 270.

Notes: The group consists of four humans, three dwarves, three tieflings, and two githzerai (MR 20%), all 4th-level fighters. Alignments include N, CN, and CG.

SA—one of the humans (the guard captain) has a *wand of paralyzation* (6 charges).

Special Equipment: scale mail, footman's mace, rope, handcuffs.

◆ MEETING GIFAD ◆

When Negue pulled Gifad's file for the PCs, he didn't withhold any information—there just isn't a lot written down about the barmy. No Bleaker alive today seems to know anything about the circumstances of his arrival or his particular brand of dementia. The Bleakers confess, however, that it's routine to ignore a barmy's past and give him a new name to symbolize the shedding of his old, troubled life. A few caretakers mention the "legend" that Gifad is the first inmate ever to have been locked up in the wing, proudly attributing his longevity to their treatment regimen. They also remark upon his penchant for divination, though they hastily add that at least half of his predictions prove to be just so much screed.

Gifad's cell is just like all the rest: dark, filthy, noxious, and uncomfortably cramped. However, the stone walls and floor are covered with faint etchings: slash lines used to mark the passage of time. The barmy slowly and painfully carved them into the rock with his own fingernails, starting from the first day he landed in the cell. It was the only way he could keep track of the days, months, and years—the only way he'd know when five centuries had passed and the Labyrinth Stone once again came to Sigil. (The system makes sense only to Gifad; the slashes are haphazardly arranged, with too many marks for anyone else to count.)

The old sod himself is hunched and pasty, with long, stringy white hair and perpetually bloodshot eyes. He's lost most of his teeth, which muddles his speech significantly, and he's worn his fingertips raw from all the scratching. Several deep scars mar his face, including one that cuts across his right eye (a subtle clue to that fact that he's really Rowan Darkwood). His only clothing is a tattered and much-stained piece of burlap, worn like a tunic. Despite all this, he looks fit and hearty, since he exercises regularly to help pass the time.

The Bleakers leave the PCs alone to talk to Gifad; they've got plenty to do in the wake of the recent chaos. Throughout the ensuing discussion, the barmy is quite excited and animated. See, he thinks the gem he lost is due

to arrive in Sigil any day now (or perhaps it already has—he suspects he may have miscounted the days), so he’s especially desperate to give his cell the laugh. He rambles on about how he’s the Chosen One, how he alone has tumbled to the dark of the mighty gem. The barmy has many questions for the heroes about what’s transpiring “out there,” and he demands that he receive answers before he’ll give any back. Gifad’s desperate to know the actions and whereabouts of Rowan Darkwood, but the PCs can’t provide much useful chant on that subject.

GIFAD (Pr/♂ HUMAN/F19/FATED/CN): AC 7 (Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 72; THACO 2; #AT 2; Dmg 1d2+8 (fists, Str bonus); SW -2 to saves vs. mind-affecting spells; SZ M (6’ tall); ML fanatic (20); XP 9,000.

Notes: Heimdall abandoned Gifad/Darkwood when he started the faction war and enslaved Nilesia, stripping him of all priestly abilities. His alignment changed and 500 years of slow insanity reduced some of his statistics, both of which caused him to lose his ranger status.

S 20, D 17, C 14, I 17, W 4, Ch 5.

THE BIG SECRET+

When the cutters question why Gifad cares so much about Darkwood, he spills the dark of it all. But, being insane, he doesn’t remember all the events in quite the right order, and he leaves out or alters a few details here and there.

What’s more, he refers to the Duke as a separate individual—and insults him viciously.

Eventually, though, patient PCs can piece together the following story (the DM can introduce specific details from the Background of the chapter titled “How It Begins,” as needed).

Darkwood started the faction war as a distraction for his own grasp at power. He knew the Harmonium and the Sensates would stand in his way, so he escalated tensions between them and the Doomguard and the Revolutionary League. Meanwhile, he secretly married Alisoehn Nilesia to gain the support of her most loyal Mercykillers, then turned stag on her and sold her to the fiends. He played Arwyl Swan’s Son for a leatherhead and used the paladin’s compassion

as a smokescreen for releasing killers from the Prison, hoping they’d wreak even more havoc in the Cage. And just as he was about to smite the Lady of Pain with a powerful gem he’d finally found, she tossed him into the Mazes.

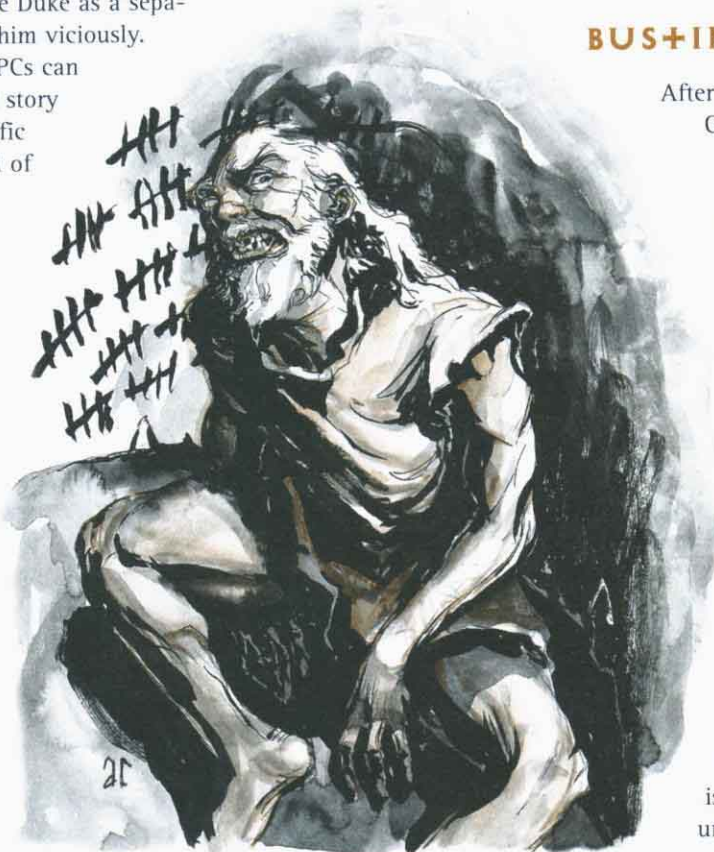
But the Duke’d done his research. He escaped the Mazes with a pre-prepared *wish*—but he didn’t count on being taken back in time 500 years! He appeared in the Gatehouse, where the Bleakers thought he was just a barmy and locked him up. They also gave him a new name: Gifad.

Naturally, the DM should squeeze as much dramatic build-up out of this revelation as possible. Fact is, the PCs may not accept it as truth. Using *ESP* or similar mind-poking magic on Gifad reveals little but a turbulent brain-box, though the barmy clearly believes what he’s saying—he’s not trying to con them. If pressed for proof of his wild tale, Gifad says that Darkwood preserved the details of his arrogant plan on a *recorder stone* in the Civic Fes-thall’s sensoriums. The barmy still has the key to the box in which the stone’s kept (well, the Bleakers confiscated it when they grabbed Darkwood, but it must be around somewhere!).

If asked, Gifad says he knows nothing about what happened to all the factols (except Nilesia, of course), but he blames the Lady—after all, she took care of Darkwood, didn’t she? He can’t explain his incredibly long life, though he vaguely remembers that Darkwood met some bloods somewhere who helped him prolong his existence. And his so-called divination skill is nothing but an occasional memory of what, for him, was history.

BUSTING GIFAD LOOSE

After giving the dark to the cutters, Gifad insists that they help him escape from the Gatehouse so he can reclaim his long-lost gem—wherever it might be. (If the PCs know that it’s in the hands of Alluvius Ruskin, all the better.) The barmy claims that he’s the Chosen One, that only he knows the secret to using its power. If the heroes ask, Gifad explains that the Stone’s a prison for the spirit of the ancient wizard who nearly slew the Lady of Pain. When the jewel is destroyed, the spirit will be released and will activate some kind of long-dormant magic. Gifad doesn’t know exactly what that magic is or what it can do, but he figures he can use it to get another



crack at ruling Sigil. Perhaps this time, the raging faction war will keep the Lady of Pain from interfering.

Course, the barmy doesn't tell the PCs what he plans to do with the gem. If necessary, he even promises to use it to end the faction war, which is a lie. But as mentioned above, the cutters hit the blinds if they try to peer into Gifad's mind to verify his intentions. All they find's a chaotic jumble, and it's not within their power to cure the sod's insanity. Though it's a slim chance, their only hope for ending the faction war seems to lie in taking Gifad out of the Gatehouse.

Naturally, the Bleakers might have something to say about that. But canny PCs have a number of options. If they helped round up the barmies freed by Negue, they can ask for Gifad's release (in their watchful custody, of course) in return. They can argue that 500 years of treatment hasn't helped the poor sod a bit, so why not free up the cell space in the obviously overcrowded wing? They can start their own distraction and sneak Gifad out in the chaos. Or they can just use magic or force to roll right over the protesting caretakers.

DM NOTE: The Bleakers don't believe a word of Gifad's story. Over the years, they've heard plenty of outrageous tales from hundreds of different barmies. Gifad's claim is more entertaining than most, but that's it.

CHECKING ⊕U+ THE S+ΘRY

If the PCs ask the Bleakers for Gifad's possessions, faction members dig through boxes of old junk in the corner offices. Eventually, they find a rotting envelope marked "Gifad" that contains a small hair-band made of cornugon hide, three very old copper pieces, and a brass key. Somewhat sheepishly, the Bleakers confess that in the past, caretakers often kept or sold items owned by the barmies, leaving only the things they didn't want. That's why Gifad's envelope contains nothing but junk. The heroes are welcome to it.

The brass key—which certainly looks like it's seen plenty of wear—is marked with the number 2323. A visit to a clerk at the Civic Festhall reveals that the key opens a small storage box in one of the private sensoriums. What no one knows, though, is that Darkwood placed a powerful *glyph of warding* on the box. Any sod who lifts the lid without speaking the name "Merilyn" (Darkwood's wife on the Prime) is compelled to take the *recorder stone* out of the box and carry it outside the Festhall, where it will lose all of its stored memories. (Darkwood wanted to safeguard the stone until after his plan came to fruition, which it never did.)

An affected PC can save vs. spell at -4 to shake off the compulsion, but failure means that he tries to remove the stone from the Festhall at all costs. His comrades can break the compulsion only by rendering the victim unconscious for 12 continuous hours. Note that Gifad's no help in overcoming the ward; he doesn't remember anything about it.

The *recorder stone* in the box holds the entirety of

Darkwood's plans, which he entrusted to the stone not long before falling victim to the Mazes. If a PC clutches the stone and concentrates on unlocking its stored experiences, he's flooded with the full details of Darkwood's grand scheme—not just words, but images showing everything that happened. It also clears up any confusion in Gifad's version of the story, showing events in the proper order and filling in all the details.

SLIPPING THE BLINDS: If the PCs take the *recorder stone* out of the Civic Festhall, it immediately loses its stored chant and becomes a worthless rock. However, the heroes might drag others to the Festhall—faction high-ups, for example—to experience the truth for themselves. It's a good idea, but it leads nowhere. Most bloods just don't care. It no longer matters why the war started; all that's important now is struggling on toward total victory.

⊕N +HE TRAIL ◆ ⊕F +HE GEM ◆

Once the PCs free him from the Gatehouse, Gifad's first order of business is to return to his private chambers in the Hall of Records (the Fated's headquarters) to retrieve needed items. He also wants to rest or visit a healer to regain his full strength (Gifad's revised statistics appear below). However, he won't think to wash or clean himself up unless the heroes advise it.

Getting into the Hall is no problem, but four Fated guards stop the group from entering the factol's quarters—even though Darkwood's missing, they're not going to let a bunch of bashers and a barmy just waltz right in. Gifad, outraged, claims to be Darkwood and then rambles on incoherently about how he's the Chosen One and how he must have miscounted the days, which doesn't help his case. In order to get inside the Duke's quarters, the PCs must offer the guards a nice garnish or spin them a convincing yarn. On the other hand, lightning-quick heroes can probably fight off the four guards, grab Gifad's stuff, and flee, but if they dawdle, more troops arrive to scrag the brazen looters.

In game time, the Lady of Pain tossed Rowan Darkwood into the Mazes about 21 days ago, so his chambers have been empty since then. That is, empty except for Aram Oakwright, the Duke's right-hand-man at the Hall. See, Aram never liked his boss, so he ransacked the blood's quarters and sold a few of his possessions, figuring that Darkwood would never return. As a result, Gifad mutters that numerous items are missing, but he's glad to find his *ring of protection +5*, *sword of dancing*, *portable hole*, *necklace of missiles*, and a normal short sword he calls "Rory" (the name of Darkwood's eldest son on the Prime). Because he's barmy, he also tries to take his pillow, a moldy sandwich, and other useless items, though the PCs can persuade him to leave them behind.

Next, Gifad needs to find the ebony gem. If the PCs overheard Shemeshka's message in Act III, they know that

it's in the hands of Alluvius Ruskin, the old tiefling who runs Tivvum's Antiquities, the best portal key shop in the Cage. If they missed that clue, the best tactic is to comb the wards for any news of the unusual-looking gem. After a day or two, they find the bubbler who discovered it in a gutter and sold it for the price of a few drinks. He can point the group to the berk he sold it to, but the Stone was sold again and again, passing through numerous hands. Perseverant PCs can follow the trail across the Cage and eventually learn that it ended up with Ruskin.

GUARDS (PL/VAR HUMAN/F4/FATED/N) (4): AC 6 (ring mail and shield); MV 12; hp 23 each; THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long sword); SZ M (6' tall); ML steady (11); XP 175 each.

Notes: If attacked, one of the bashers blows a whistle, bringing four additional guards in the third round of melee and four more every other round thereafter.

Special Equipment: long sword, ring mail, shield.

GIFAD (PR/♂ HUMAN/F19/FATED/CN): AC 2 (ring, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 104; THACO -1; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+var+8 (sword, Str bonus) and 1d6+8 (short sword, Str bonus); SW -2 to saves vs. mind-affecting spells; SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (20); AL CN; XP 13,000.

S 20, D 17, C 14, I 17, W 4, Ch 5.

Notes: In combat, Gifad makes two attacks per round with his *sword of dancing*, which is +1 during the first round, +2 the second, +3 the third, +4 the fourth, then back to +1 the fifth, and so on. Starting in the fifth round, he allows the weapon to fight on its own (as F19) and takes up his short sword.

Special Equipment: short sword, ring of protection +5, sword of dancing, necklace of missiles, portable hole.

◆ TIVVUM'S ANTIQUITIES ◆

Tivvum's Antiquities is a five-story cylindrical tower in the Market Ward; on each of the floors, shoppers can pick up various items that're known to work as portal keys. Barrels and bins on the first two floors hold small bulk items like bones, glass shards, and flower petals. Larger items sit on shelves or hang from pegs on the third and fourth floors, and the fifth floor holds the rarest and most expensive portal keys. A spiral staircase connects all floors.

The shop's run by Alluvius Ruskin ("Lu"), an elderly tiefling who passes herself off as a sweet, eccentric old blood. The dark of it, though, is that Lu's as cruel as they come. She's an incantifer—a powerful wizard who collects and absorbs magic—and she's long sought the ebony gem.



She knows it contains the spirit of the ancient spellslinger, and she figures he could help her fight the Lady of Pain and ultimately conquer Sigil. But Lu doesn't want to rule the city in any normal sense of the word; she hopes to suck every last drop of magic out of the Cage, making herself all-powerful and the Lady as weak as a worm. Thus, she wants to use the Labyrinth Stone not to cast the hidden Sigil spell, but to absorb it.

About a month before she obtained the gem, Lu's spies dug up a fragment of handwriting on parchment so old that it practically crumbles in a stiff breeze. The note, apparently penned by the ancient wizard himself, briefly describes how to use the Sigil spell. But it goes on to describe each of the player characters, as if they were destined to play an important role when the spell is finally unleashed. Ever since she read that, Lu's kept a peery eye out for the cutters, determined to smack 'em down before they can interfere with her plans.

Like its owner, the tiefling's shop is more than it seems. When Lu's in danger, the small portal keys in the first-floor containers join together to form protective golems. The slats of the spiral staircase fold down at Lu's command, turning the stairs into a slippery slide. A permanent *there/not there* spell cast upon the shop's lone entryway (on the first floor) lets Lu close off that means of escape for any sod she chooses. The thick stone walls of the tower are enchanted to absorb any magic meant to move a body through or past them (*passwall*, *teleport*, *dimension door*, and so on), though Lu herself is immune to this restriction.

Finally, a ring of hidden rooms on the top floor contains many of the tiefling's secrets—including the ebony gem. Refer to the map on page 107.

CASING THE KIP

Once Gifad learns that Lu has his gem, he's determined to raze Tivvum's Antiquities to the ground and pick his prize out of the rubble. Hopefully, the PCs will persuade him of the benefits of stealth and subtlety, and the group will stake out the tower or study it from within. Nevertheless, Gifad's desperation and insanity make him a nervous, rambling question mark. While in his company, the heroes must keep him from drawing too much attention.

Tivvum's is open to the public from eight bells after antipeak until six bells after peak. During this time, the group's free to enter and browse. They probably stand out a bit more than they'd like—with most portals shut down, few folks care to buy keys—but a special sale's attracted a handful of bashers. When Lu's not assisting customers, the tiefling sits behind a half-moon desk near the entrance. At all times, she maintains her image as a nice, harmless, helpful old lady, the kind that good-hearted folks rush to defend.

Lu spots the PCs soon after they arrive, suspecting that they match the sketchy descriptions in the ancient piece of writing. She cautiously keeps an eye on them wherever they go, using *clairvoyance* if necessary. Until she determines exactly what they want she keeps up her pretense of sweetness, reminding them often that she's ready to help out as soon as they need her.

The cutters won't find much out of order in the shop, though just about everything—especially Lu—radiates a high level of magic. If asked, the tiefling chalks it up to the influence of the tower's previous owner, the mighty wizard Tivvum, adding: "Some of it must've rubbed off on me." However, she masks her true nature with *undetectable alignment* and *misdirection* (to foil detect evil).

If the heroes come right out and ask Lu about the ebony gem, she denies any knowledge of it. "Course, my memory ain't what it used to be," she chuckles. "I

buy jewels for portal keys all the time; you're welcome to look through the gem barrels." That won't help the PCs; most of Lu's containers hold only cheap, ordinary gems of every shape, size, and color. (One basket's full of jewels that house innocent spirits, which she bought from shadow fiends, but the cutters won't realize that.) Still, an Intelligence check or use of magic might reveal the tiefling's uneasiness at the question. Feigning curiosity, Lu tries to get the heroes talking about why they want such a specific gem, probing their brain-boxes with her *medallion of ESP* to see if their words and thoughts match.

The PCs might pick up a clue on the dim, moody fifth floor, where bleached slaadi skulls, quill pens made from archon feathers, and stones from the bed of the River Styx rest in candlelit glass cases. A close inspection reveals that the top floor is slightly less wide than the others, with a diameter of just 180 feet (instead of 200). The missing space is taken up with Lu's private chambers, which lie between the top floor's inner wall and the true outer wall of the tower. As noted above, the building's outer wall is protected against magical transportation to prevent troublemakers from escaping. However, the top floor's inner wall is not, so *passwall* and the like will allow the PCs to reach Lu's quarters.

FIGHTING LU

The heroes might concoct any number of plans—peeling Lu by posing as buyers or sellers of rare keys, hiding in the shop until after hours, breaking in under cover of darkness, or trying to lure her away from her post. But it's highly unlikely that they'll find the ebony gem without first battling the tiefling. Remember, Lu's already wary of them, due to the ancient note. Fact is, she plays along with any scheme



the PCs dream up, if only to uncover the dark of their motives and perhaps catch them in a trap.

If combat breaks out while the shop's full of customers, Lu plays helpless and cries out for their aid. The portal-key golems rush to her defense, as well. From the barrels and bins on the first floor, 1d6+4 golems assemble out of any materials the DM likes. Statistics appear below for two examples: a golem made of rope and wire, and another constructed of the shadow fiend gems. When "killed," a golem reverts to its component parts that return to their container, unable to reform that day.

The DM should also remember that Lu can block the shop's entryway and flatten the staircase at will, and that the PCs can't use magic to escape through the walls of the tower. The tiefling relies on her bag of tricks for as long as she can, but she brings her own formidable powers to bear if she must, even if it means revealing her abilities to other bashers in the store at the time.

Her first goal is to protect the Labyrinth Stone. She's reluctant to leave the safety of her shop, so she stays in the tower as long as possible. However, if the battle with the PCs goes badly, Lu tries to grab the jewel and run. 'Course, she can't leave the Cage because the portals are closed, so the cutters should be able to chase her wherever she goes. If

seriously threatened with the dead-book, the tiefling gives up the gem and flees, intent on punishing the PCs another day. She figures that the Stone ain't worth dying for, especially since she can't work out how to use the sodding thing.

Gifad tries to avoid combat, if possible. He much prefers to let the PCs do all the work while he looks for his stolen gem. But since the heroes will probably need his help against the powerful incantifier, they'll have to win his assistance however they can.

ALLUVIUS RUSKIN (PL/♀ TIEFLING/WIL14/INCANTIFIER/NE): AC -3 (*bracelet, ring*, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 52; THACO 16 (14 with punch [Str bonus]); #AT 1; Dmg 1d3+3 (fist, Str bonus); SD infravision 60', *darkness* 15' radius (1/day), absorption, immunities; MR 45%; SZ M (5' tall); ML elite (14); XP 13,000.

Notes: Lu's spells below take into account the extra wild magic spells she receives as a specialist. Those marked with an asterisk are wild magic spells, found in the *Tome of Magic*.

SD—If Lu makes her MR roll, she absorbs the effect of any spell, spell-like power, or magical item used against her (except weapons or *antimagic* areas). This heals 1 hp of damage per spell level absorbed and lets her cast spells without losing them from memory (as per a *rod of absorption*). Immune to nonmagical extremes of temperature or environment; no need to breathe;



half damage from magical cold; +2 bonus to saves vs. fire, electricity, and poison (due to race); +2 to all saves (due to *ring*).

S 18/51, D 18, C 10, I 17, W 9, Ch 12.

Spells (6/6/6/5/5/3/2): 1st—*hold portal*, *Hornung's guess**, *Nahal's reckless dweomer**, *patternweave**, *shocking grasp*, *sleep*; 2nd—*chaos shield**, *Hornung's baneful deflector**, *misdirection*, *Nahal's nonsensical nullifier**, *undetectable alignment* (reverse of *know alignment*), *web*; 3rd—*alternate reality**, *clairvoyance*, *fireflow**, *flame arrow*, *hold person*, *wraithform*; 4th—*enervation*, *Evard's black tentacles*, *stoneskin*, *there/not there**, *unluck**; 5th—*cone of cold*, *fabricate*, *teleport*, *vortex**, *wall of force*; 6th—*chain lightning*, *eyebite*, *wildstrike**; 7th—*Hornung's surge selector**, *prismatic spray*.

Special Equipment: *amulet of life protection*, *boots of levitation*, *bracelet of defense* (AC 5), *medallion of ESP*, *ring of protection* +4, *gem of brightness*, *wand of paralyzation*, *scroll of protection from acid*, *potion of invulnerability*.

ROPE GOLEM: AC 5; MV 12; HD 6; hp 37; THACO 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8/1d8 (whip/whip); SA bind; SD struck only by +1 or better weapons, immunities; SW *rope trick*; SZ M (6' tall); Int non (0); ML fearless (20); AL N; XP 1,400.

Notes: This golem forms from assorted bits of tough rope and thick wire; its arms end in vicious whips of the same material.

SA—once every other round, the golem can send a length of rope (AC 5, THACO 15, hp 20) snaking out from its body toward the nearest target. A successful attack means the rope binds the victim and holds him motionless until he makes a Strength check or the rope is destroyed.

SD—immune to poison and mind-affecting spells; no damage from blunt weapons.

SW—a *rope trick* spell causes the golem to pause for 1 round as it fights to retain control of its component parts.

GEM GOLEM: AC 2; MV 12; HD 10; hp 52; THACO 11 (melee) or 9 (missile); #AT 2; Dmg 2d4/2d4 (fist/fist); SA projectiles; SD spirits; SW cold; MR nil; SZ M (6' tall); Int non (0); ML fearless (20); AL N; XP 4,000.

Notes: This golem forms from shadow fiend gems that contain the captured spirits of mortal sods.

SA—once every other round, the golem can fire a gem like a missile (dmg 1d8) at a target up to 30' away.

SD—every 5 points of damage inflicted on the golem destroys several of its gems, causing the spirits within to howl as they dissipate forever. Victims who hear the moans must save vs. spell or find themselves unable to attack the golem during the next round.

SW—double damage from cold-based spells.

LU'S CHAMBERS

As an incantifier, Lu has no need to eat, sleep, or breathe. Fact is, her ring of hidden rooms and hallways—entombed in the stone walls of the tower, with no ventilation—contains very little oxygen. Thus, air-breathing PCs start feeling weak

after 5 rounds in the ring, losing 2 hit points and making all attack rolls and saving throws with a –2 penalty. Each round thereafter spent in the ring, they lose an additional hit point and the penalty increases by 1.

Refer to the map on page 107. Each chamber is about 10 feet wide and the hallways connecting them are only 5 feet wide, so the PCs probably have to travel single file from room to room. Note that the Upper Sanctum is elevated and sits above the Lower Sanctum, accessible through secret doors 10 feet off the ground. Lu uses her *boots of levitation* to reach the secret doors.

Except for the Upper Sanctum and the Trading Area, each chamber is lit by a rock with *continual light* cast upon it, which hangs by a rope from the ceiling. The hallways remain in darkness.

A. LIVING QUARTERS. This spartan chamber doesn't seem to be much of a kip, as it has no bed and no food supplies, though that might not be immediately obvious to the PCs. A dresser full of clothing's all that marks this room as a living area at all. The *continual light* stone hangs above an extremely uncomfortable chair. On a desk next to the chair is a book that speculates on various possible origins of the Lady of Pain, a bookmark noting the page where Lu left off.

The locked desk drawer contains 530 gp and a *potion of extra-healing*. PCs who search through Lu's clothing for 3 rounds find the small key that opens the drawer. However, the lock's nothing special; the bashers can break it on their own.

B. MAP ROOM. Maps of Sigil—many of which seem to date back hundreds of years—cover the walls of this chamber. They're pasted haphazardly, each crooked and covering parts of other maps, and many tears and creases show how roughly they've been handled. Lu's drawn circles, Xs, and arrows all over most of the maps, charting the locations of portals in the Cage. The PCs should be able to spot a few that they've used themselves, but many of Lu's markings are wrong (due to bad information, shifting portals, and so on).

If the heroes try to peel a map from the wall, it tears to pieces—when Lu stuck them up there, she meant for them to stay. That's why she covered old maps with new, rather than take the old ones down first.

C. TRADING AREA. Magical *darkness* keeps this room pitch black. This is where Lu meets with Ly'kritch, a shadow fiend who brings her gems from the Lower Planes in exchange for raw evil magic. The tiefling's traded with Ly'kritch for years, hoping to one day find the jewel with the ancient wizard's spirit, but so far the fiend's gems have contained only mortal sods caught unawares. Lu tosses them into a basket on the first floor of her store, secretly delighting in the fact that unsuspecting shoppers purchase them as portal keys, never realizing that the poor spirits're consumed along with the gems.

A few of these jewels lie scattered on the floor beneath a tall archway made of rotted wood. The archway's set

against the stone wall, but it doesn't lead anywhere. Truth is, it's a portal to the catacombs beneath the Mortuary, where Ly'kritch lairs. Because the portal leads to another location within Sigil rather than outside the city, it still works. The PCs can use it as a means of leaving Tivvum's Antiquities; the key is the memory of a dead friend. If the cutters take this route out, the DM can decide for himself whether or not they get into more trouble beneath the Mortuary.

D. STOREHOUSE. In order to maintain her strength Lu must absorb a certain amount of magic each month, which she usually drains from enchanted items purchased or stolen from folks in the Cage. Afterward, she tosses the objects in this room, and here the PCs find dozens of useless wands, brooches, gloves, rings, and so on.

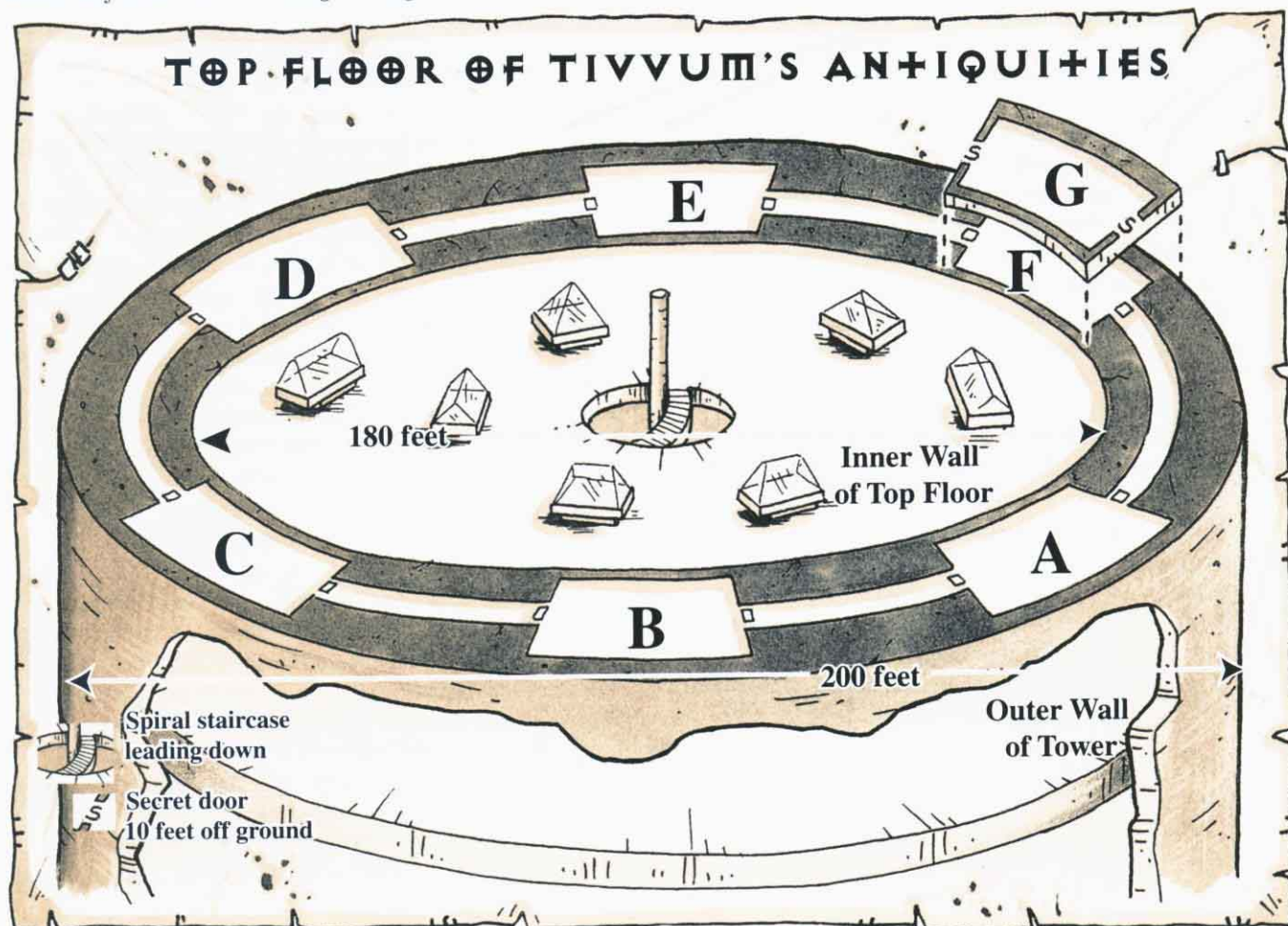
If the cutters search through the debris for 4 rounds, they find three daggers, two clubs, a spear, and a short sword, which are no longer magical but still useful weapons. *Detect magic* reveals a few items that Lu forgot to drain completely: a *ring of warmth*, a pouch containing *dust of dryness*, and a *robe of vermin*.

E. LIBRARY. In her quest for the ebony gem, Lu spent a good deal of time researching the history of the Lower Planes, and this chamber's lined with dozens of tomes on that subject. While they make for interesting reading, most don't impart

much useful chant, though the PCs could sell them in the Market Ward for 3 gp each.

One shelf close to the ground holds other kinds of books, including:

- ◆ dull accounts of her shop's inventory;
- ◆ a log book that lists nearly a hundred portals known to work in Sigil, along with their destinations and keys (if known);
- ◆ journals detailing her long search for the Labyrinth Stone;
- ◆ a record of her dealings with Ly'kritch;
- ◆ a *manual of golems*, which includes Lu's special procedures for animating the portal keys (though it's nothing the PCs could duplicate);
- ◆ a history of the Incanterium, written by Tivvum himself. Flimsy and faded, the book describes the founding of a faction of mighty spellslingers, the power they wielded in Sigil, and their eventual destruction by the Lady of Pain. (Tivvum survived, obviously, since he wrote about it, and he's the blood who made Lu what she is today.) The book also points out that the Incanterium derived its inspiration from the ancient wizard who challenged the Lady of Pain, only to become trapped in an impenetrable ebony jewel. (This reference originally alerted Lu to the existence of the Stone.)



F. LOWER SANCTUM. Lu uses *permanent illusion* to transform this bare room into recreations of her favorite locations throughout the Outer Planes. She comes here to relax and “get away from it all” without actually having to leave the safety of Sigil or her tower. Her strong powers of illusion make each scene appear as immediate and infinite as the real thing, though nothing poses any true danger.

Currently, the Lower Sanctum recreates a fiery landscape on Khalas, the first mount of Gehenna, complete with crimson skies, acrid steam, and bubbling magma (but no living creatures). The scene’s visible as soon as the PCs open one of the doors that lead into the chamber—it looks as if they’re about to step through a portal to the Lower Planes! Once inside the Sanctum, the heroes feel as if they’re really on Gehenna, able to “travel” as far as they like in any direction. If they shut the door behind them, it vanishes. Successfully disbelieving the illusion will cause the doors to reappear, perched incongruously on the volcanic slope. However, the fiery landscape remains—only Lu can wipe away the false scene.

In the hallways around the Lower Sanctum, secret doors are set into the walls a few feet above the normal, floor-level doors. These secret doors lead into the elevated Upper Sanctum. The PCs can’t spot them from the ground, though; they must raise themselves to a height of about 10 feet first. Canny cutters might notice accumulated pebbles and dirt around the base of the Lower Sanctum’s doors, which rain down when Lu uses the secret doors above.

G. UPPER SANCTUM. In this cramped, low-ceilinged room, Lu studies the ebony gem, which is currently held in the pincers of an apparatus unfamiliar to the PCs. A long wooden rack fixed to one wall holds similarly mysterious tools, though the heroes notice a few ordinary objects (a magnifying glass and a needle-tipped knife).

The room has no continual light stone, but the Labyrinth Stone glows with its own bluish haze. With care and patience, the cutters can pry it from the grip of the apparatus. Anyone who peers intently into the gem can make out strange wisps, almost like fog, swirling around within. But the wisps don’t form any sort of recognizable face.

Tacked to the wall across from the rack are several pages of notes detailing Lu’s observations about the Stone, none of which provide any real insight (except that she’s been unable to affect the thing). One piece of paper, though, is the ancient note handwritten by the trapped wizard. It’s a brittle piece of parchment, long ago torn in two, so that only the last half of the author’s words remain. They say:

...the strength of a single word? And any word, any word I choose! I have buried the lines such that I may reshape the entire city in the image of that word. Tonight, I will complete the scroll. Tomorrow, I will walk the path and cast the enchantment. As the last words die in the air, I will

surrender my life energy, my essence, letting the magic become me, and me it. At that moment, I will focus on my word and my dark intent, and Sigil will be my plaything, and the Lady will lie in chains at my feet. For the word I will choose is “slavery.”

The note ends by foretelling the involvement of the PCs, describing their appearances, personalities, and so on. The heroes aren’t referred to by name, only by sketchy, almost cryptic descriptions that lack much detail. To the PCs, though, the similarities are eerie; they should have little doubt that they are, indeed, the berks in the note. The handwriting doesn’t say what role they play in the unfolding drama, only that they are “mercenaries of some importance.”

DM NOTE: Naturally, the torn parchment makes no mention of the gem, since the wizard wrote the note before the Lady snared him.

◆ THE UNITY OF RINGS ◆

At this point, either Gifad or the PCs finally have the Labyrinth Stone (assuming they survived the fight with Lu, of course). The barmy insists that it’s his property, but the heroes likely don’t want to entrust it to him. However, they’ll soon find that they have little choice. Gifad reminds them that only he knows the dark of releasing the ancient wizard, that only he has communed with the spirit of the gem, that only he is the Chosen One. And it seems to be true. After all, Alluvius Ruskin couldn’t figure out how to open the jewel, and neither can the PCs damage or destroy it—not even with a *wish*. The Lady of Pain’s power is just too great.

If the cutters flat out refuse to hand the gem over, Gifad strives to get it by any means necessary. If the party seems weakened by recent events, he attacks and tries to take the Stone by force. If he feels unable to win such a battle, he hires the best thief in Sigil to trail the PCs and steal it from them. If the heroes seem noble, he appeals to their morality and begs them to let him use the gem to end the faction war (by making himself master of the Cage, of course). And if all else fails, the barmy simply agrees to whatever conditions they impose—anything to get the Stone. After all, he endured the Mazes and sat in a dank cell for 500 years, waiting for the day that it’d be his again, and he won’t give up now.

Course, Gifad doesn’t know that the wizard’s spirit won’t do anything by itself. Its purpose is to power the Sigil spell. From the parchment they found in Lu’s quarters, the PCs can infer that the spirit should be released at the conclusion of the spellcasting. The note also implies that by focusing on a single word—any word of his choice—the caster can reshape the face of Sigil, making it conform to the meaning of that word. And the heroes probably obtained the spell scroll from Vadelisu at the end of Act V (or even persuaded the blood to stick around and help them personally).



So, now the cutters must decide whether or not to share the dark of it with Gifad. But no matter what they tell him or keep from him, they need to have the barmy around to release the spirit when they're done casting the spell. The scroll directs them to travel the streets of the Clerk's Ward in a particular pattern. It takes about an hour, during which time they may need to protect themselves from the effects of the faction war. After the PCs have completed the pattern, Gifad can do his part.

Gifad cups his hands tightly around the glowing gem, its bluish haze barely spilling out between his fingers. Eyes closed, his lips begin to form silent words. As his mouth moves faster, the jewel grows brighter, until it seems his hands enclose a violet fireball. Suddenly, the barmy opens his hands, revealing nothing but a cloud of intense light that wafts like smoke. A low, sad moan fills the air, and from the center of the billowing light you'd swear you hear an ethereal voice cry: "You fool!"

Over the next few moments, the wispy light expands and thins, dissipating into the air until there's nothing left of it. "Oh, didn't want to die?" cackles Gifad, as he dances with joy. "Too bad, too bad! Now the magic is mine!"

Meanwhile, the PCs become aware of a loud disturbance in the area.

Thanks to the war, you've grown accustomed to berks running and yelling in the streets, so you don't pay much attention as folks in the area seem to scatter—until you spot a robed dabus floating calmly toward you, directly in front of a much larger figure. This other figure floats, too, and also wears a robe, and while the flat expression on her sculptured face betrays no emotion, your soul shrieks when you see the gleaming blades that ring her head like the petals of a lethal rose.

"No!" Gifad points an accusing finger at the Lady, as furious as a rabid beast. "Not again! I can stop you this time!" Growling, he lunges for the dabus, and the Lady turns her head slightly in his direction, and he is gone. There is no sound.

The dabus stares at the spot where Gifad disappeared, showing no reaction, then turns toward you as if noticing you for the first time. A handful of symbols appear over his head. [The Unity of Rings.] The symbols fade, and the Lady and her escort float on, slowly.

Then they stop. The dabus slowly turns back toward you and more pictures appear above his white hair. [The power is yours now. Use it wisely.]

The air-pictures fade. The dabus turns back to the Lady, and the pair glide down the deserted street until they disappear from view.

Obviously, the DM should play this scene as dramatically as possible. It's not every day that the PCs find them-

selves in the presence of the Lady of Pain—and the mere fact that she didn't send them to the Mazes or the dead-book should elicit tears of shuddering relief. Truth is, she ignored them completely, other than directing the dabus to give his strange message. But what happened to Gifad? The berk's true fate remains a mystery to the cutters, and perhaps that's for the best (but the DM will tumble to the dark of it soon enough).

Now, of course, the PCs're left with the opportunity to direct the magic of the Sigil spell as they choose.

◆ WITH GREAT POWER ◆

Having cast the spell and released the ancient wizard's spirit, the PCs must now choose a single word and concentrate upon it. Hopefully, they realize that they dare not make the decision lightly—the very fabric of Sigil will be remade according to that word. The sods probably don't understand how it'll work, exactly, or in what sense their word'll be interpreted. That's fine. The enchantment laid down by the old spellslinger is the twisted magic of a forgotten age, truly beyond the comprehension of the PCs.

But they do have the wizard's original word, "slavery," to guide them. His handwritten note indicates that he planned to concentrate on both the word and his particular intent, resulting in his tyrannical domination of the Cage. 'Course, the Lady imprisoned him in the Labyrinth Stone before he could make his dark vision a reality, so she must not have liked his choice of word.

Most likely, the PCs argue over the best use of the magic, which lies waiting to be unleashed. But they can't flap their bone-boxes about it forever—if not used, the empowered spell eventually fades away. Given that the faction war's no closer to an end, the cutters probably decide to follow Vadelisu's original plan and use the spell to stop the bloodshed. But what word to choose? "Peace" jumps to mind, as does "calm," "balance," "order," and the like. But the heroes must take care. Charged words like "order" carry with them additional weight; a wish for order without the proper intent could, for example, result in an efficient but brutal baatezu takeover!

In any case, when the PCs select a word and concentrate on it, nothing seems to happen. There's no flash of light, no rumble under their feet, no sudden eruption of magic—nothing. Fact is, they might wonder if the spell worked at all. But if their honest intent is to stop the faction war, the DM should proceed to "Ending the War," below. If the PCs decided to use the spell for another goal, the DM should proceed to "Other Choices."

ENDING THE WAR

For the first day or so after the PCs cast the spell, there seem to be no changes in the war. But then odd things start to happen.

The Xaositects decide that they're bored with the fighting and withdraw. Arwyl Swan's Son realizes that dozens of violent offenders were accidentally released from the Prison, and he charges the Sons of Mercy to stop fighting and devote their efforts to scragging the berks. The Sensates and the Free League settle their differences and team up to repel tanar'ri attacks on the Civic Festhall and the Bazaar. The Ciphers, who never gave up trying to mediate an end to the conflict, persuade the Guvners that Hashkar's death was not the fault of the Xaositects. Faith, Factol Sarin's widow, talks the Hardheads into laying down their arms—at least, for now. And so on.

These events (and others created by the DM) occur slowly, spread out over a week or so, and everything that happens seems quite logical and reasonable. In other words, the war winds down on its own. The Cage doesn't become a haven of peace overnight, but each faction, for its own reasons, agrees to call a halt to the fighting. They're not ready to kiss and make up, but they're prepared to talk things out. The factions realize that in their feverish push for vengeance and political dominance, they lost sight of what really mattered: philosophy and belief.

Because this process seems to take place naturally, the PCs probably wonder if their actions really did trigger the changes, or if it's all just a big coincidence. But it doesn't matter. The dark of it may be a mystery, but the war's over.

⊕+HER CHOICES

It's possible that the PCs use the magic of the Sigil spell to bring about an entirely different effect. They might try to make what they consider to be a positive change, like causing the portals to start working again or ridding the Cage of fiends. On the other hand, they might pursue a more selfish agenda, setting themselves up as masters of Sigil or sending their own personal foes to the dead-book. They might even walk a moral middle ground and ask that one particular faction win (or lose) the war.

'Course, it's hard to bring about a very specific change when they must boil their wish down to a single word. But what if, for example, they decide that the Harmonium should crush their enemies and rule Sigil? Can they choose the word "victory" and concentrate on Hardhead domination?

That kind of decision's up to the DM, who must determine for himself how much he wants to let the PCs direct the future of his campaign. Remember, though: The heroes should face repercussions in proportion to the magnitude of the changes they bring about. In other words, if they give the Hardheads dominion over the Cage, they'll end up regretting it dearly—especially when other bashers learn

what they've done and come after them. Just as with an ill-chosen *wish* spell, the DM should try to fulfill the letter of the cutters' choice while still perverting the ultimate result. This isn't a chance for the PCs to become gods. Instead, the DM should use it as an opportunity to teach greedy sods a lesson about the abuse of power.

It's important to note that the Lady of Pain won't allow the heroes to destroy her or cause the ruin of Sigil. Long ago, she blocked the ancient wizard from doing just that, and she can stop the lowly PCs without missing a beat. Fact is, she knows full well the power that lies in their hands, and she's decided to give them a chance to wield it wisely. But if they settle on what she considers an unacceptable choice, she'll quickly show them the error of their ways—and the berks won't like it one bit.

Finally, if the PCs don't use the spell to stop the fighting, the conflict eventually peters out as described in "Ending the War," above. But the streets of Sigil suffer a great deal more bloodshed, destruction, and misery first. What's more, the PCs should experience this enduring pain in a very personal way, to drive home the fact that they could've stopped the violence—but didn't. They might lose their homes, their friends, their family members, their reputations, their most prized possessions, and perhaps even their lives.

◆ WRAPPING UP ◆

The Epilogue on page 112 reveals the fate of Darkwood/Gifad, ties up loose ends, and spills the dark of it all for the DM. If he chooses, the DM can find ways in future PLANESCAPE adventures to let the PCs, too, tumble to the truth. Or he can just keep it secret, making it another timeless mystery of the planes.

'Course, just because the factions have stopped beating on each other doesn't mean that everything's back to normal—far from it. After all, the Armory lies in ruins, the Doomguard have all but disintegrated, the Mercykillers have split three ways, fiends have ravaged the Cage, victims of war litter the streets, the portals remain closed, Sarin and Hashkar are dead, and the rest of the factols are still missing.

Needless to say, the Lady of Pain is...*displeased* with the factions. By sending the factols to the Mazes, she meant to dissuade them from their endless, meaningless political games. But instead of heeding the warning, the berks laid waste to her city and its denizens. The Lady's determined to prevent that from happening again. And what she does about it marks the beginning of the next great era in the history of the City of Doors. The dark of it all's in the Aftermath, starting on page 114.

I KNOW!
LET'S TRY TO MAKE
THE CITY SQUARE
INSTEAD OF ROUND!
—A POOR USE
OF THE SIGIL SPELL



He awoke in darkness, a blade at his throat.

"I say we eat him," rasped a scaly, spidery thing crouched over him, one appendage holding a jagged knife just under his chin.

"Look at him—this bag of bones won't bring three rukat. Who'd buy a slave this old?"

"And I said we take him with us." The dank cave erupted in hissing and movement. It was too dim to count the things scabbling around him. How did he get here? The last thing he

remembered was—was—gods, his head ached. "Do not forget your place, Tsssibili. Or do you challenge me?"

For a moment the sharp blade pressed harder against his neck, drawing a thin line of blood, and then its owner withdrew, cursing. Two creatures jerked him to his feet like a puppet and pushed him along, crawling through slimy tunnels until they reached a herd of prisoners, all sagging under chains like his own. Gifad. His name was Gifad. He'd had another name, too, once: something about a forest?

Dozens of nightmarish things surrounded the captives and whipped them into the back of a palpitating crystal wagon that began moving forward, pulled by a black shape with too many legs. The walls of the lurching prison were coated with hundreds of small, translucent stones, which reminded Gifad of—what? Something tugged this way and that in his brain-box.

Months passed as the slavers slithered across the planes, acquiring and selling their wares. Many captives went mad from the sights and torments thrust upon them, but Gifad knew he could keep hold of *his* mind. Fact is, the fog clouding his head thinned out more each day. He remembered long years spent screaming in a cell, hating a berk called Darkwood. Someone had damned him to that cell, the same person who'd sent him into the hands of the slavers. But he'd almost had her—her? Yes, *her*. He saw the face of a lady—a noble?—with a strange headdress. She feared his magic—power he'd sapped from another, from a ghost trapped in a stone. There was a battle of some kind; he recalled the presence of a handful of mercenaries. The lady cast him out of the city—it was a distressed town, curved like a ring—because he was fated to rule it, to remake it. Yes, of course! How could he have forgotten?

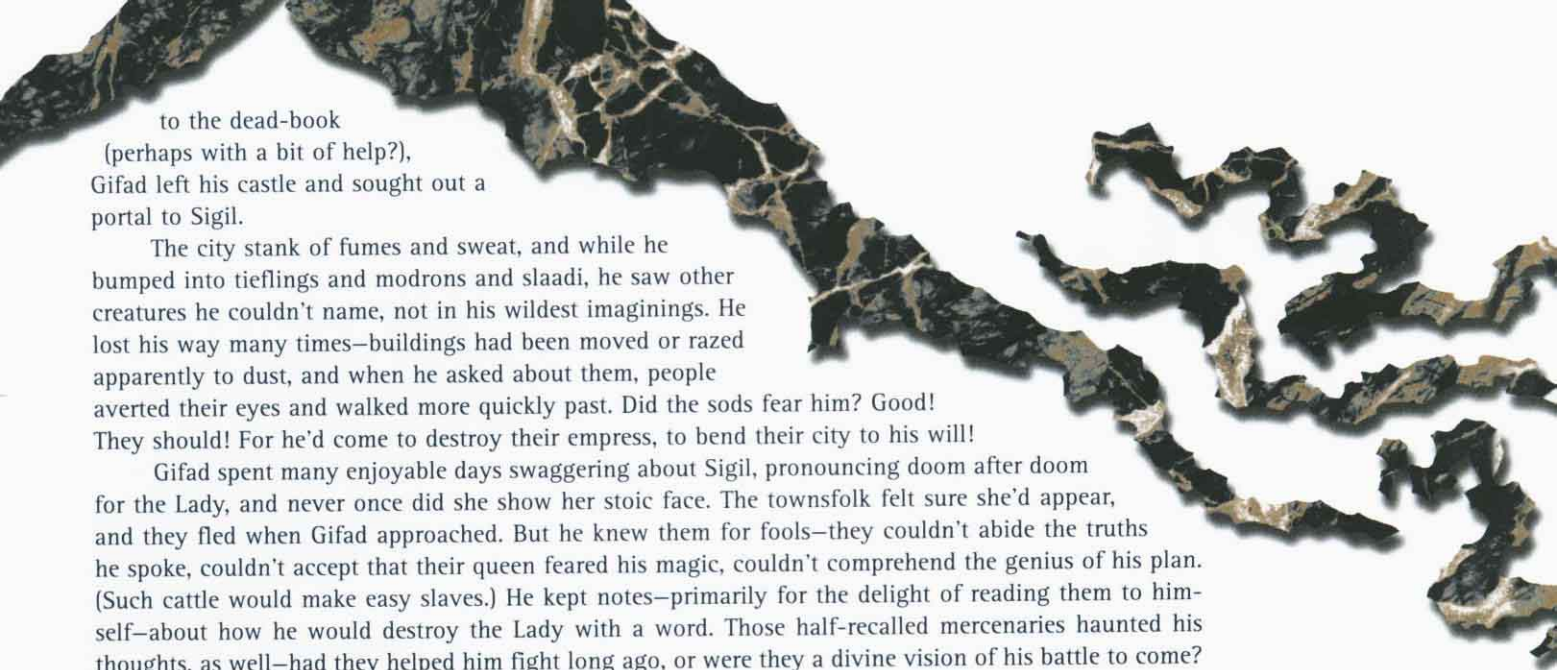
Still, he didn't *feel* any magic flowing in his veins. No matter. What he had once, he could have again. When the wagon stopped at the next slave market, Gifad offered himself to a stately wizard looking for a servant. The spidery things thrashed him near to death, but the spellslinger—impressed, perhaps, or just weary of browsing—bought him just the same. And back at the wizard's keep, a castle that walked on hairy bird legs, Gifad swept floors, pressed robes, mopped up spilled experiments, and learned the art of magic.

Much later, while studying a lesson on theoretical spaces, he came across a diagram in one of his master's tomes, a sketch of a ring-shaped city: Sigil. Eagerly, he pestered the wizard for knowledge of this place. The blood knew little, but sent Gifad to apprentice with a wiser mage, who told what he knew of the city, its doors, and its queen, a figure some called the Lady of Pain. The spellslinger also taught him the deeper truths of magic, but Gifad craved even more—now that he knew his foe, he had to rise above her. And so he moved on again, and again, and again, learning greater and greater secrets from each new spellslinger. Acheron, Carceri, Mount Celestia—wherever dwelled a wizard of repute, there he went to study.

The planes had changed since last he traveled them, but Gifad had no time for sightseeing. His lessons were all that mattered. Soon it seemed like a thousand years had passed since he'd awakened in the cave, and perhaps they had—who could keep track of such things? Eventually, he knew power like never before, and one day he decided that his current tutor would be his last. And when the old wizard finally went

EPILOGUE

MY +RUE DESTINY
AWAITS ME
IN SIGIL.
—GIFAD,
MORE RIGH+
+HAN HE KNOWS



to the dead-book
(perhaps with a bit of help?),
Gifad left his castle and sought out a
portal to Sigil.

The city stank of fumes and sweat, and while he bumped into tieflings and modrons and slaadi, he saw other creatures he couldn't name, not in his wildest imaginings. He lost his way many times—buildings had been moved or razed apparently to dust, and when he asked about them, people averted their eyes and walked more quickly past. Did the sods fear him? Good! They should! For he'd come to destroy their empress, to bend their city to his will!

Gifad spent many enjoyable days swaggering about Sigil, pronouncing doom after doom for the Lady, and never once did she show her stoic face. The townsfolk felt sure she'd appear, and they fled when Gifad approached. But he knew them for fools—they couldn't abide the truths he spoke, couldn't accept that their queen feared his magic, couldn't comprehend the genius of his plan. (Such cattle would make easy slaves.) He kept notes—primarily for the delight of reading them to himself—about how he would destroy the Lady with a word. Those half-recalled mercenaries haunted his thoughts, as well—had they helped him fight long ago, or were they a divine vision of his battle to come? It was so hard to remember.

Before long, Gifad grew tired of cowing the populace and set about putting his plan to work. He walked through what they called the Ward of Masks, weaving a lattice of powerful magic into the streets themselves. It took but one day, during which time the townsfolk shunned him and the Lady remained hidden. Fine—this would be easier than he'd thought! That evening, he penned a scroll of directions and made himself ready for the ultimate sacrifice, for only his life essence, his spirit, could trigger the enchantment. A fine trade: his corporeal shell for mastery of Sigil.

When the city grew light with the new day, Gifad began to trace the path of the buried magic, reading from the scroll as he went. A hesitant few followed him, but no one dared get too close. Weak, ignorant fools—if they only knew! The day passed, and still he walked. And then, as dusk settled, as he took the final step that completed the lattice, the Lady appeared before him like a tombstone, silent, watchful, unmoving.

"Too late!" he cried, drawing forth his own spirit as if coaxing a genie from a lamp. "Your city is mine!" Gifad's body collapsed into dust, and what remained of him descended toward the ground, toward the waiting magic. But his spirit suddenly found itself blocked, boxed, trapped—enclosed in some kind of dark, impenetrable shell. The prison grew smaller and smaller, causing him agony. An ethereal voice filled the air: *None but you may unlock this jewel, and then only from without. Thus are you snared, till eons hence.*

Was this the Lady's doing? Impossible! Her magic was not greater than his! But how could he crack the shell from the outside if he was trapped *within* it? He struggled to burst free, to wake the sleeping enchantment—when something *else* awoke inside him.

And he saw it then for the first time, as if he'd stepped back from a spattering of dots and finally perceived the terrible mural they formed. He knew what had happened, who he was, who he had been, who he would be yet again. He knew that he would find himself not once, but twice, and that he'd die at the hands of the barmy he'd been—the barmy he'd be. And, worst of all, he knew that he'd rot somewhere, lost in darkness and totally alone until that time, whenever it came to pass.

Sanity came upon him then, and he wailed at the power of the fates that drove the multiverse. It had taken three of him to bring these events about—the Rule of Threes. They looped back in on themselves like a constricting bracelet—the Unity of Rings. And for this torture and eventual destruction, he could blame no one but himself—the Center of All.

He wondered, then, if the Lady knew all along. Did she trap him rather than simply annihilate him, because she saw what must occur? Did she (will she?) spare Darkwood from death so that he could go on to become Gifad, who could go on to become her ancient foe? Did she engineer the events so that the jewel would be opened only when she desired it—only when the proper set of circumstances had finally arisen? Was her hand the guiding force, or was she, too, a prisoner of fate, helpless to break out of her shell, her role?

He didn't know. Perhaps he'd never know.

But at least he'd have a lot of time to think about it.

AFTERMATH

Micha cursed as he stumbled over a leprous deader lying in the road—can't those sodding dabus clean this mess any faster? He regained his pace as quickly as he could, not bothering to glance behind him to see if the Sons of Mercy still gave chase. He knew they did. The Hardheads may've been tougher, but those do-gooder Sons were twice as persistent. Sodding paladins.

He ducked down a rubble-strewn alley and ripped his flesh crawling through a gap in a wire fence. Just ahead sat the open manhole—his ticket to Acheron and freedom, thanks to the pouch of ball bearings in his pocket. Micha poured on a final burst of speed and threw himself down the hole, into that exquisite moment when the world'd turn upside-down and he could lose himself in the skirmishes of a battle cube.

Instead, he landed face-first in the foul slime of the sewer. Micha staggered to his feet, spitting and gulping for air, as he heard the paladins gathering on the street above. Sodding Lady, he thought. Nothing's the same any more.

◆ S+RIKE TWO ◆

Cagers who lived through the Great Upheaval (some 630-odd years ago) or who sat spellbound listening to tales passed down through the generations agree on one thing: The Lady of Pain acted in the best interests of Sigil when she forced the 50 or so warring factions to reduce their number to 15. See, the berks

forgot about their feuds and vendettas right quick and scrambled to fall in line, bringing peace to the city almost overnight. Sure, at the time, Her Serenity's decree hit like a crossbow bolt between the eyes, ushering in more chaos and suffering than it was meant to stop. But in the long run, the Cage was the better for it.

Unfortunately, times change. No sooner had the dust settled than the 15 factions that made the final cut started to carve Sigil up like a pie. Trouble was, each group wanted the biggest slice. They claimed different roles in the governing of the Cage, and most sought to one-up the others by taking on more and more authority all the time. Over the next 630 years or so—a long time for any mortal—the factions began to think of themselves as the natural and permanent rulers of Sigil, and their egos swelled like leeches as they sucked the blood of the city.

'Course, the Lady of Pain *ain't* mortal. She remembers the time before the Great Upheaval like it was yesterday, and recalls an era when Sigil was utterly *free* of factions like it was last week. To her, the reign of the 15 factions has been like a candle burning itself into oblivion, and after the disappointing events of the recent war, she's determined to snuff out the flame before it flares again.

Two days after the truce is declared by all parties, the Lady of Pain reopens the portals of Sigil (as described later in the Aftermath). On the day after that, the Lady manifests herself before the new leaders of each faction with one dabus in tow. Her mute servant's air-pictures deliver a simple, shocking message: *This city tolerates your faction no longer. Abandon it or die.*

DON'+ FØRGE+
WHØ RUNS +HIS +ØWN,
BERK!
—A PØMPØUS HARDHEAD,
WHØ HAS FØRGØ++EN



A NEW BEGINNING

The Lady's edict turns the high-ups and graybeards on their heads like nothing else. Does she mean that the factions must dissolve their organizations and give up the reins of power? Or does she mean that they must leave the Cage itself behind—and, if so, must they remain exiles forever? Can a basher remain in Sigil if he belongs to a faction that's based elsewhere? Does the Lady's infamous limit on the number

of factions that can exist at one time still apply?

Despite the confusion, the dabus don't bother to explain the intent of Her Serenity's message or phrase it any more clearly. The factions call an emergency meeting at the Hall of Speakers and spend two days protesting, whining, and arguing over the precise meaning and consequences of the decree. But it doesn't really matter. Every last one of 'em knows the end result: Their time is over, at least for now.

Individual sections below describe how each of the factions responds to the Lady's pronouncement. Some head for their favorite planes, intending to return someday. Others pack up and leave town for good.



Some stay in Sigil but officially disband, their members becoming just another crowd of Cagers. But whether the people

themselves leave the burg or stay, the power structure of each faction—the official charters and ranks and symbols and privileges—no longer has a place in the City of Doors.

The Lady of Pain didn't impose a specific time limit for compliance with her edict, but no one's leatherheaded enough to try her patience. The factions immediately begin the disagreeable work of dismantling their cherished organizations. And whether the groups go or stay, one thing's clear: Many of their private headquarters will soon become public structures, open to any basher who feels like wandering through. Thus, the factions pack up their libraries, arrange to store their treasuries elsewhere, cart away all personal possessions, brick up any portals they want to keep secret, and generally remove all traces that they were ever there.

As chant spreads through the Cage and folks watch some of the strongest institutions they've ever known collapse like houses of cards, reactions are mixed. Plenty of bashers're glad to see one or two of the factions stripped of power, and a surprisingly large number rejoice to see 'em *all* put in their place. But fear and worry also grip the sods—life as they know it's about to change dramatically, and perhaps forever.

However, after folks have a chance to get used to the new way of things, they make a startling discovery: The burg doesn't fall apart just because the factions don't run it any longer. Fact is, in a lot of ways, it's better. Cagers slowly realize how dependent they were on the factions—mainly because the factions set it up that way—and that the bloods just weren't as important as they made themselves out to be. Over time, most folks in Sigil decide that once again, the Lady of Pain acted for the good of the city. Sure, some gray-beards still argue that she helped spark the war in the first place by sending the factols to the Mazes, but to most bashers, the ends justify the means.

Perhaps the Lady knew all along how the story'd play out—perhaps she knew that Sigil must be cleansed in fire and blood before it could be reborn. And maybe that's why she didn't lift a finger to stop the war, when she could have done so easily.

'Course, it's possible that the Lady merely acted as some say she always does: according to her whims and furies, with no regard for the present or the future. But most folks don't like to think about things like that.

EFFECTS ON PLAYER CHARACTERS

After the Lady makes her wishes known, the first question posed by any PC who belongs to a faction will likely be: "Does this mean I have to turn in my badge?" And the answer is: not necessarily. The DM should read through the rest of this section, which describes how each faction reacts to the big news. He should make the heroes aware of these responses (either right away or through various roleplaying scenes) and give each faction member the opportunity to choose his own direction. But here's a general overview:

- ◆ Three factions cease to exist: the Believers of the Source, the Mercykillers, and the Sign of One. PCs can no longer belong to those groups, and they lose any special faction abilities and privileges they gained through their beliefs.
- ◆ Six factions move their power structure to a new location: the Athar, the Doomguard, the Fated, the Fraternity of Order, the Harmonium, and the Revolutionary League. PCs who belong to these groups can move or remain in Sigil. They don't lose their special faction abilities or the potential to advance through their faction's ranks.
- ◆ Six factions remain in Sigil but disband (at least for now): the Bleak Cabal, the Dustmen, the Free League, the Society of Sensation, the Transcendent Order, and the Xaositects. PCs who belong to these groups can stay in Sigil without renouncing their faction membership and keep whatever abilities they've gained to that point. But they can't gain any new faction powers or advance further in rank.

It's worth noting: The Lady outlaws the factions' power structure, not belief in their ideals. Planars know (and so does the Lady!) that ideas can't be killed. Factioneers don't have to abandon their faith; they just can't rely on having an official organization to protect it anymore.

THE ATHAR

No Defier'd ever admit it, but one reason—perhaps the main reason—that the Athar remained in Sigil for so long is that powers can't get into the city. The Lady just plain keeps 'em out. So big-talking faction members felt quite safe railing into this god and that, denouncing the powers as frauds. Now, of course, the Lady's told them to dissolve their faction or leave the Cage. The Defiers're too zealous to call it quits, but if they leave the safety of the City of Doors, they'll be easy pickings for any power who's grown tired of their insults. Thus, most of them flock to the only other place they know of in the multiverse where they might stand a chance:

the base of the Spire in the center of the Outlands. Any deity who sets foot there temporarily loses his godly might.

The enigmatic rilmani, the race that already lives around the Spire, tolerates the Athar's presence, at least for now. 'Course, it ain't exactly a high-traffic area, which means that the Defiers quickly grow frustrated at being unable to spread their dogma to others. But if they head elsewhere on the planes, they risk suffering the retribution of the gods. It's a tough choice, and some say that their decision proves that they're really cowards at heart.

Not all Defiers flee Sigil, though. Some remain and go underground—literally—in order to keep a shred of their organization alive. In the dark warrens of UnderSigil, they hold meetings and make plans and condemn their enemies. Ultimately they hope to restore the Athar to power, but for now they're just a pitiable club of bitter berks who hate the gods. Meanwhile, up on the streets of Sigil, Friar Muriovarianis (Pl/♂ human/P12 [Hades]/LE) has the ruins of the Shattered Temple razed. He builds a new church to the god of death and wealth on the site—the ultimate indignity. He's aided by former Dustmen factor Oridi Malefin (Pl/♀ tiefling/C18/N), a cleric devoted to the ideal of Death.

THE BELIEVERS OF THE SOURCE

Even before the faction war, the Godsmen'd grown tired of sitting around and waiting to stumble across the kinds of tests that'd help 'em move along the path toward ascension. They wanted to set out and find appropriate challenges for themselves. And when the Lady gives the order to leave town or close up shop, they decide it's just the push they needed. The faction moves out of Sigil, planning to roam the unexplored reaches of the multiverse, testing themselves as they go.

Before they leave, though, they're approached by the Signers, who also plan to quit the Cage. The two groups find enough common ground to merge, and as a result they form a brand-new faction called the Mind's Eye (see page 128), based on core elements of their respective philosophies. All former Godsmen are automatically welcome to join. They're not required to switch, but the Believers of the Source no longer exist, so anyone who doesn't join the Mind's Eye must seek his fortune elsewhere. Members of the new group vote and agree that wise Ombidias (Pr/♂ voadkyn/Shaman 9/NG), a former Godsmen high-up, will lead them.

THE BLEAK CABAL

When the Bleakers learn that they can no longer operate as a faction in Sigil, they just shrug. What difference does it make? They stop calling themselves a faction and go back to aiding the poor and the mad. Nothing really changes. Ironically, the Bleak Cabal may be one of the most stable of all the factions, as they're able to weather dramatic storms of sweeping change.

Officially, the Bleakers disband. They now have no leader, no symbol, and no trappings of their former organization. But they continue to feed folks at their soup kitchens and tend to the barmies at the Gatehouse.

THE DOOMGUARD

Folks say that Factol Pentar always seemed hell-bent on taking the Doomguard apart, and now it seems that she got her wish—even though she wasn't around to see it. As a result of losses suffered in the Battle of the Armory and other, smaller conflicts around Sigil, the Sinkers're practically extinct. And the few handfuls left get nothing from Cagers but hatred. They're seen as some of the primary instigators of the war and claims that they were peeled by Darkwood have nothing to do with it.

Thus, they leave Sigil and travel to their four faction citadels on the Inner Planes to lick their wounds. 'Course, they have to go the long way now that the Armory's fallen (its corner towers used to act as links to the inner-planar fortresses). But with no leaders and no agenda for the foreseeable future, it's not like they have much else to do. Eventually the Doomguard might rebuild itself, but since that'd run counter to their call for entropy, the new group'd have to be a very different kind of faction.

THE DUSTMEN

Like the Bleakers, the Dustmen don't much care that they must shed the ranks and colors of their faction. Besides, they'd been led for their entire history by Skall, so it's hard for them to imagine continuing under a different high-up. They dissolve their organization and simply continue their work of running the Mortuary. The word "dustman" becomes a general term among Cagers, meaning any basher who disposes of corpses.

Unfortunately, when the Lady restores the portals of Sigil, not all of the ones in the Mortuary start working again (see "The Tempest of Doors," later in this chapter for details). Deaders pile up for awhile before the dustmen can adapt, and chant is the bashers're thinking about relocating to a new location in Sigil—someplace with a large number of known, reliable portals.

THE FATED

Life's tough for the Takers. A few bashers here and there might've fought in the war, but the faction as a whole officially stayed out of the conflict. Yet the Fated're now among the most despised folks in the Cage, and it's all because they had the bad luck to be led by a berk with delusions of grandeur. During the war, the factions were too busy to compare notes, so Darkwood's role in sparking the mess remained a secret. But once they start talking again and fitting the pieces together, they soon discover the extent of the

Duke's manipulations (especially if the PCs share their knowledge of the *recorder stone*). Darkwood becomes one of the most hated figures in the history of Sigil, and those who still call themselves Fated suffer for it.

Why stay where they're not wanted? The Takers decide to collect their things and head to Ysgard for awhile, perhaps to return when the heat dies down. There, they become even more insular and self-sufficient than ever, though in a different way. The Fated shift their focus and grow accustomed to living on whatever they can *get* rather than what they can take. Living by themselves on a plane as wild as Ysgard, faction members worry more about need and less about greed. In a sense, it seems the machinations of Darkwood have forced the Fated down a path more closely related to the original intent of the group—an intent twisted and perverted over the years by self-serving factols and political treacheries.

DM NOTE: The remaining members of the Fated don't know that their high-up lived another life as Gifad. Fact is, unless the PCs spill the beans, no one in Sigil tumbles to the dark of Gifad's true identity (except, perhaps, for a few clever cutters like A'kin the arcanaloth). Everyone assumes that Darkwood fell victim to the Mazes just like most of the other factols, and that was that. Even if the PCs confess what they've learned, no one believes 'em, and the sods haven't any proof.

'Course, no one but the Lady of Pain knows the rest of the story—how Darkwood/Gifad became the ancient wizard—and she's not likely to start talking.

THE FRATERNITY OF ORDER

The murder of Hashkar hit the Guvners hard, but the revelation that their leader was a petitioner hits them even harder. A handful of high-ups knew the dark of it, of course, and chant often buzzed through the ranks, but the bashers protected the secret fiercely. They figured that the other factions'd lose respect for them if the truth came out, and they were right—as usual. The high-and-mighty Guvners, the bloods who set the laws, led by a deader who shouldn't even have been in Sigil in the first place? ('Course, it helps to explain why Hashkar bored everyone he met to tears.)

Add to this embarrassment the damage done to the faction during the war, and it's easy to see why the Fraternity pulls up its rug and marches back to Mechanus. They plan to return to the Cage someday, even if they must abandon their present organizational structure, because they still believe that Sigil's the key to understanding the multiverse. For now,

though, they hole up in the Fortress of Disciplined Enlightenment and begin the laborious process of electing a new factol. Until then, candidates Jamis (Pl/♀ human/P10 [Oghma]/Fraternity of Order/LG) and Lady Nancias Garabutos (Pl/♀ human/W11/Fraternity of Order/LN) rule jointly.

THE FREE LEAGUE

Ask any Indep, and he'll say that the Free League's *never* been a faction, just a bunch of independent-minded cutters who liked to help out the little guy. And now it's official. Fact is, it's the closest thing to paradise that any Indep can imagine. No more factions! No more oppression! And best of all, no more Harmonium! The former Indeps take off their faction symbols, kick up their heels, and continue to oversee the trade at the Great Bazaar—though with a bit more spring in their step. They're sorry to have lost their leaders and the sods who died in the war, but they feel as if they're poised at the cusp of a bright future.

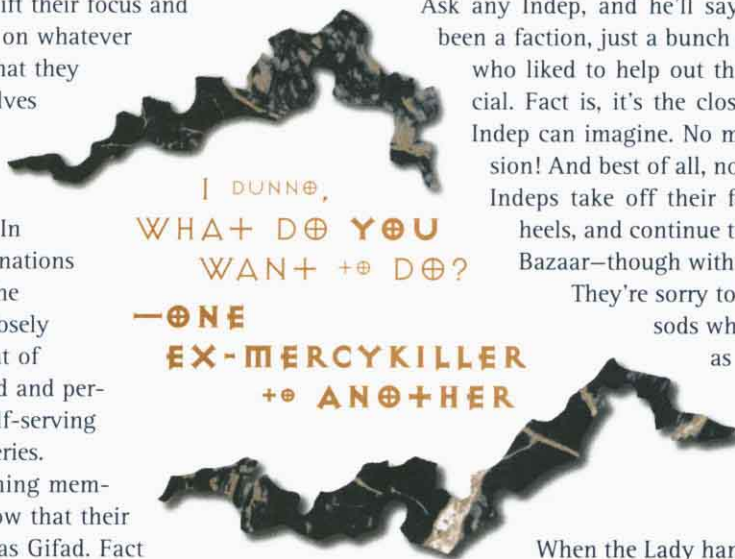
THE HARMONIUM

When the Lady hands down her decree, the Hardheads simply say "pike it" and pack their bags for Arcadia. They figure they've spent long enough trying to put the Cage on the proper path to harmony, with nothing to show for it but the distrust and hatred of most of the city. Besides, they had no real reason to stay in Sigil anyway, other than the fact that it made a convenient base of operations. But even a member of the Harmonium can see the folly of beating his head against a wall. They leave the Barracks for whatever squatters want to claim it and depart the Cage for good.

Faith (Pl/♀ human/P14[St. Cuthbert]/Harmonium/LG), the widow of slain Factol Sarin, emerges as the new factol, and she seems likely to guide the Harmonium along a more spiritual path. It was Faith who helped talk the rest of the Hardheads into laying down their arms at the end of the war. The bashers were humbled by her heartfelt cries for peace—after all, she had the most cause of any of them to burn with hatred and demand bloody vengeance. And it was her idea to relocate to more hospitable surroundings. Planewalkers who pass by the faction's new headquarters on Arcadia report that the group's a lot less militaristic than it used to be. Still, once a Hardhead, always a Hardhead—chant is the group now hopes to unite the Upper Planes under the banner of law.

THE MERCYKILLERS

What happens to the Mercykillers? Well, by the time the faction war ends, there're hardly enough of the sods left to



worry about. They weren't wiped out, like the Doomguard. Instead, they just drifted away to other factions like rats deserting a sinking ship.

Remember, when Nilesia vanished, the Red Death started to split three ways. The most honest and good-hearted cutters joined the Sons of Mercy under the paladin Arwyl Swan's Son. The worst of the bunch re-formed the Sodkillers, with no one particular in charge. That left a gaggle of bashers who couldn't make up their minds one way or the other. No charismatic blood stepped forward to take charge and lead them in a new direction, so they slowly broke apart, bit by bit. Some followed the Sons of Mercy, some hooked up with the Sodkillers, and the rest went their own way.

Thus, the Mercykillers cease to exist. For the dark of the two groups that burst out of the crumbling Red Death, see "The Sodkillers" and "The Sons of Mercy," below.

THE REVOLUTIONARY LEAGUE

For years, the Revolutionary League struggled to end the tyranny of the factions by dashing them to bits on the rocks of truth. Well, their dream has at long last become reality, leaving the Anarchists with a troubling question: Now what?

Sure, they always said that once the factions fell, common bashers could wade through the rubble and finally have a chance to discover "the big dark" on their own. But they never bothered to explain what that big dark really was, or think about how folks might react to a sudden and total lack of authority. Fact is, plenty of Anarchists never thought they'd see the factions destroyed in their lifetime—or perhaps ever—and so never figured out what'd happen afterward.

Thus, the Revolutionary League decides that the masses must be shown the way to truth, and that they're best qualified to serve as the shepherds. Officially, the faction disbands (which isn't saying much, as it had little organization to begin with). Most of its members then gather in a stronghold on Carceri and begin to plot the means of establishing a regime

in Sigil, something to which the masses can look to for guidance. Naturally, the system'll have to be harsh at first—the common sods will need firm direction—but as it'll grow out of principles of chaos and truth, it'll be nothing like the Harmonium. Really.

'Course, the former Anarchists aren't used to working together, so the debates on Carceri often degenerate into pointless violence. Very little gets done. However, a large chunk of the group dislikes any talk of setting up a new regime and breaks away from the rest, intending to form a new Revolutionary League—one that'll oppose whatever



government the others try to put into place. And so the Unity of Rings holds once again. There'll always be a need for revolutionaries.

THE SIGN ☉ F ☉ NE

Over the last few years, it seems that so many splinter groups have broken off from the Signers that the faction's core principles have become diluted or even lost. Worse, folks often don't distinguish between the "real" Signers and the various offshoots, tarring them all with the same dirty brush. Thus, after the war, the faction decides to disband and start fresh with a new, untainted name and a firmer sense of direction.

After some discussion they approach the Believers of the Source, a group equally dedicated to the power of the self. The two come together to form the Mind's Eye, a new faction (see page 128), and leave Sigil to chart their way through the rest of the multiverse. Any Signer can join the new faction, even those who decide to give up on their splinter groups, but no one's forced into it. Bashers who turn down the invitation can't call themselves Signers any longer, though—the Sign of One ceases to exist.

Back in the Cage, the Hall of Speakers—no longer needed by the factols, of course—is purchased by businessman extraordinaire Harys Hatchis (Pl/♂ human/M8/NG) and rented out to groups for meetings, conventions, and the like. Chant is, though, that the dustmen might be interested in turning the building into the new Mortuary, as long as they can check out its collection of portals in advance.



THE SOCIETY ☉ F SENSATION

The Sensates fall into the same category as the Bleak Cabal and the Dustmen. It's not that they don't care about being a faction—they do. And indeed, great numbers of Sensates emigrate to the Gilded Hall on Arborea, perhaps permanently, while others decide to roam the planes in search of increasingly more exotic experiences. (Some even fall in with the Mind's Eye.)

But many choose to give up their official faction membership in order to remain in Sigil and maintain the Civic Festhall. What better way to gain philosophical converts than by exposing folks to the wonder and majesty of the multiverse—all packed into one convenient location in the Cage? The cutters feel that their brethren who moved to the Gilded Hall will grow fat and lazy, while those who wander

the cosmos focus too much on their own experiences, rather than on helping others discover the joys of sensation.

Thus, Sensates who stay in Sigil tend to be the most altruistic of the bunch, the forward-thinking cutters who want to promote their vision more than anything else. 'Course, they can no longer call themselves official faction members, but they can still provide entertainment to the public—which they do, with a vengeance. Attendance at the Festhall rises dramatically in the months following the war, with folks looking for all sorts of pleasures and distractions to help them put their suffering behind 'em. (See "Faction Fever," later in the Aftermath, for a look at the latest craze in Sigil's popular culture.)

THE SODKILLERS

This vicious group started with a gathering of the meanest ex-Mercykillers in the Cage, the berks who cared more for pummeling a sod's head than for making sure that justice was served. Back before the Great Upheaval caused them to merge with the Sons of Mercy, the Sodkillers were a full-fledged faction, devoted to the principle that any problem could be solved with the right kind (and right amount) of physical force.

Now, of course, they can't exist as a faction, so they form the Minder's Guild instead and hire themselves out as bodyguards and mercenaries. Before long, they develop a reputation for ruthlessness, efficiency, and great success, which brings all manner of thugs, thieves, and cutthroats to their door—including criminals that Darkwood freed from the Prison. And so the Guild grows in size and power.

They're not an inherently evil group; fact is, they count more neutral bashers among their number than anything else. But all members of the Minder's Guild value a good show of force—and the willingness to use that force in whatever manner is required to get the job done.

They hope that one day the Lady will lift her latest restriction and allow factions to operate in Sigil once again. When that day comes, the Minder's Guild plans to remake itself into an official faction, a group that can influence and control the direction of the Cage.

THE SONS ☉ F MERCY

Arwyl Swan's Son served as second-in-command of the Mercykillers under the tiefling Alisohn Nilesia, and he had little choice but to stand by and watch as she perverted the faction's original mission to deliver clean, honest justice. It pained him to see her order the hangings of sods who'd done no more than steal bread to feed their families, but as Nilesia had such a large contingent of Mercykillers backing her, Arwyl could only try to gather support quietly, behind the scenes.

'Course, Nilesia vanished before the situation came to a head (and no one's tumbled to her true fate). That gave

Arwyl the chance to break away from the foundering Red Death and uphold the principles of justice on his own, as leader of the Sons of Mercy. The Sons were a noble faction before the Great Upheaval, when circumstances forced them to ally with the Sodkillers. They'd like to be a faction again, but they're willing to wait until the Lady of Pain deems it so.

In the meantime, the Sons of Mercy oversee the Prison, checking the history of each and every inmate to see if he's already paid his debt to society and should be set free. It's a grueling, time-consuming process. What's more, the Sons also patrol the streets of Sigil, trying to teach the lesson that crime doesn't pay. When they arrest a berk, they make him serve out a sentence in accordance with the nature of his crime. For example, a basher nabbed for stealing bread might have to deliver food to the poor for a week. Serious crimes like murder still earn a trip to the Prison, but Arwyl imposes fair sentences. He places justice above all.

Unfortunately, as the Sons aren't a faction and don't have any legal power or jurisdiction in the city, they usually encounter resistance when scragging criminals. Truth is, they do a poor job of it, which leads many folks to do something they never thought they'd do: Long for the days of the Harmonium.

THE TRANSCENDENT+ ORDER

Sigil's always needed clear thinkers, bloods who can bring a sense of inner peace and balance to the turbulence of daily life. And with the Cage struggling to sweep up after a devastating war, that need's never been more obvious. The Transcendent Order has long served their fellow citizens by persuading the other factions to solve their problems with words, not clubs, and they continue to do so after the war. The Ciphers tear up their charter in order to stay in Sigil and help the Cagers rebuild and heal.

The bashers don't have any official power any longer, but they found the Sigil Advisory Council and guide folks through the process of nominating and electing worthy representatives. Well-spoken bloods with a sincere desire to establish and maintain peace in the Cage fill the nine seats on the Council. And of the nine, only one's ever served in city government before: Rhys, the former factol of the Transcendent Order.

See, Rhys takes on special significance in the City of Doors, as she's the only factol known to have survived the Lady's purge. Sure, she did it by hiding out on Elysium until all the fuss died down, but the fact that she saw the signs of trouble—and knew how to avoid the worst of it—means

that she's just the kind of blood needed on the Council. The tiefling's not a factol anymore, and she has no more pull than anyone else she serves with, but folks still hold her in high esteem.

It's suggested that the Council conduct its business and meetings in the Great Gymnasium, but Rhys nixes that idea to head off any charge that her former faction has undue



influence over the nine representatives. The Council prefers to meet in a smaller venue anyway, as they want to avoid the spotlight and focus on the tasks at hand. A group of hill giants from Ysgard—all physical-fitness buffs—takes over management of the gym.

THE XAOSITECTS

Chant is the Xaositects have existed on the planes longer than any other faction, but since they keep disbanding, reforming, and changing their name, the graybeards can't compile a reliable history of the group(s). And now the Lady says they can't be a faction any more—so what? Maybe they were ready to quit on their own. Karan's gone, but again, so what? He'd given up the job of factol many times during his career, only to take it back when he felt like it. In other words, the Xaositects carry on as if nothing'd happened. They ditch the little bit of structure they used to have, but it's not something most folks'd even notice.

THE TEMPEST ♦ OF DOORS ♦

Two days after the truce, a tiefling named Blakesbane tries to use a Hive Ward portal known to lead to the first layer of the Abyss—and succeeds. This is the first indication that the Lady has released her lock on the portals, that Sigil is once again the City of Doors. The chant spreads through the burg, prompting a wave of joy and relief as folks who've been trapped in the Cage round up their portal keys and prepare to leave. One of the first is a human named Dalia Mur, who happily strides through a well-known Clerk's Ward portal, very late for an appointment on Bytopia—and simply walks through the archway, going nowhere.

This is the first indication that things have changed.

Perhaps it was the strain of shutting down so many portals all at once. Perhaps the Lady felt it was time for a change. Or perhaps she has less control over the doors of the Cage than anyone suspects. But for whatever the reason, when the Lady of Pain restores the portals, they don't work quite the way they used to. Not all of them reopen. And of those that do start working again, not all of them appear in the same location in Sigil, lead to the same destination, or require the same key.

Relief quickly turns to frustration and then to panic, as folks all over Sigil tumble to what's happened. Wizards find themselves buried in requests to cast *warp sense* on practically every bounded space in the Cage, looking to see if a portal's destination or key has changed—or if the door's disappeared entirely. Mobs storm the City Court and demand

that the Guvners release their portal logs to facilitate the tests going on all over the city. Just about every basher in Sigil runs to see if he can still count on his favorite portal—and bub-houses rapidly fill up with demoralized sods looking to drown their sorrows.

How does this affect a PLANESCAPE campaign? Simply put, a DM should feel free to close, move, alter, or leave untouched any portal in Sigil that the player characters use or might learn about in the future. The ripples of change even reach out to portals on other planes that lead into the city—they still whisk a traveler to the Cage, but they might not deposit him where he expects.

EFFECTS ON THE CITY

After the reality of the Tempest of Doors (as it comes to be called) has sunk in, folks grow a lot more peery of using portals. After all, what prevents the Lady from mixing them up again tomorrow, or shutting them all down for good? Naturally, Cagers always knew that she controlled the entrances and exits to the burg, but they'd grown to take the portals for granted. The Tempest comes as the rudest of awakenings, and it brings about a number of changes.

Some bashers just aren't able to handle the reminder that everyone in Sigil lives only by the will of the Lady. Many give the Cage the laugh for good. Others just simply wallow in the worry that if it happened once, it can happen again. A few, however, tumble to the truth. Those who realize that the Lady of Pain closed the portals to prevent a deadly invasion understand that the Lady watches out for the city's best interests.

'Course, they don't come to this conclusion until they recognize that the portals weren't closed long enough to do any real harm.

Regardless, Sigil's reputation as a waystation of the planes loses a bit of its luster. A handful of planewalkers swear off the burg entirely and seek out other means of traveling. Most cutters continue to pass through the Cage, but they make their visits as short as possible and plan their trips more carefully. Fewer adventurers establish a base in Sigil, for fear of being unable to leave when they want to plunder a goblin tower on Acheron or head off hunters on the Beastlands. Sure, plenty of folks still call kip in town, but many bloods whose livelihoods depend on coming and going look for accommodations elsewhere.

The same holds true for goods. Traders and merchants earn their jink by making efficient use of the best shipping routes, and who wants to risk perishable or sensitive cargo on an unstable line? As a result, fewer goods come through the Cage, which means that fewer goods are available for sale in the Cage. Once, a body could browse the Bazaar and walk away with almost anything he could imagine (and

YES, WE
HAVE PØR+ALS!
—A SIGN ØU+SIDE THE
BØUNDED SPACE



afford). Now, a berk's lucky if he can still find fresh Bytopian bubble-cheese—and if he can pay the inflated price. 'Course, it ain't easy for traders to regroup after years of reliance on stable portals, and powerful bloods like Estavan (of the Planar Trade Consortium) grumble and rage a lot more than they used to.

Many other portal-based businesses find themselves on hard times, too—especially a number of taverns that once drew a crowd just because every door in the place led to a different plane. Raien Blackhome, the owner of the Ubiquitous Wayfarer, tries to salvage her establishment by renaming it “Portal, Schmortal!” but she eventually loses her regulars and closes up for good.

As does the Sill (in the Market Ward), the Grim Journeyman (in the Lower Ward), and a few other similar kips. However, an old, run-down building in the Clerk's Ward suddenly blossoms with portals leading every which way, and a canny blood named Wilbur Cookenstein (Pr/♂ human/B6/LN) buys the place. He turns it into a tavern called the Bounded Space, which quickly gains a reputation as the most reliable of its kind.

Others find their own silver lining, too. Plenty of enterprising cutters see the Tempest as an opportunity to pull in extra jink by moonlighting as door-snoops—charting the whereabouts of new portals, determining the right keys and destinations, and so on. For them, business booms, since established records like the Guvners' portal logs prove all but useless. A tough basher known as Lissandra the Gate-Seeker (Pr/♀ human/M9/NG) even founds a guild of door-snoops, who take on specific jobs and report the findings back to her.

◆ PHYSICAL CHANGES ◆

The fighting may have stopped with the factions' withdrawal and the Lady's edict, but the cleanup'll take a long, long time. Many buildings suffered damage in the war, and some—like the Armory—were completely destroyed. Piles of rubble block the way on many streets, and the dabus even close off a number of roads due to falling debris from nearby buildings. Victims of the bloody battles often lie where they fell, as no one's had much time (or courage) to tote the dead-ers to the Mortuary. The Lady's Ward's befouled with as much trash and litter as the Hive usually has, and the Hive—well, it's tough to find a word that adequately captures its new level of squalor.

Speaking of the Hive, the ward actually grows in size. It's nothing that a city surveyor could measure with tape or tools, but residents of the Lower Ward and Clerk's Ward complain that the smell and filth seems to have encroached on their territory. But, after all, the war swelled the ranks of the poor, the displaced, and the orphaned, and their type tends to sink to the Hive. This expansion comes at the expense of The Lady's Ward, where golden lords peer through the curtains of their High Houses and swear that the neighborhood seems a bit smaller and sadder than they remembered it.

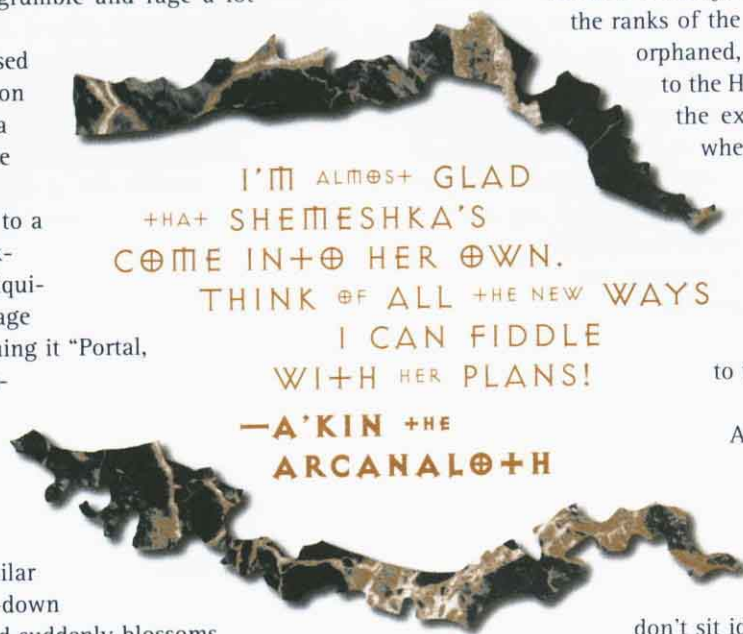
Part of that may be due to the loss of several prominent faction headquarters—the Armory, the Barracks, the City Court, and the Prison're all found in The Lady's Ward.

However, while the factions may have gone, the buildings themselves don't sit idle, and neither do any of the other former headquarters. Truth is, they pick up a lot of traffic from curious sods who've always wanted to see what they looked like from the inside, especially the stately chambers that used to be off-limits to all but the highest high-ups. Tour guides spring up like weeds, and the berks who embellish their tales with lewd or shocking chant (which they usually make up on the spot) pull in the most coppers.

THE WOUND THAT BLEEDS

A month after the official end of the war, an anonymous blood hires the construction crew of Stone and Cog to build a public monument in the Lower Ward to commemorate the disaster. The donor asks the team to make a statement by creating the new structure out of the rubble of buildings ruined in the fighting. Stone and Cog's trio—a formian named Phyton, a githyanki called Tcha, and a half-elf named Sken Leafwood—works tirelessly for three weeks, shaping an abstract sculpture over 30 feet tall and 40 feet wide at the base. A brass plaque bolted to the side identifies it only as “The Wound That Bleeds.”

Some folks who see it say it reminds them of a ballista (or maybe a chopping block, or perhaps a slaadi). Bashers who live in the area just call it a sodding eyesore. And that, art critics argue, is exactly the point: People will see it every day and remember why the ugly thing was built. But cynical chant-mongers think there's more to the monument than meets the eye. They want to know who paid good jink to have it built, and why it had to sit in a specific spot in the Lower Ward.



◆ POWER PLAYERS ◆

With the factols out the way and the factions removed from power, many opportunistic bloods step up and try to seize control of whatever they can claim. 'Course, everyone still fears the Lady of Pain and defers to what they think might be her wishes—the Lady's role in the Cage doesn't change. However, folks in general seem more uneasy and, in some bold cases, *angry* with Her Serenity over the whole mess with the factols and the portals. In the darkest shadows of town, a body can even hear whispers that it's time for the Lady to be put down, before she has another fit and seals off the city for good or sends *everyone* to the Mazes.

But while some berks sit and stew and toss the chant about pipe dreams, the rich and well-connected take advantage of the momentary vacuum of power. Shemeshka the Marauder (Pl/♀ arcanaloth/HD 12+24/NE), who'd already spun a large web of commerce and chant-mongering, has her agents spread the word that she's now the one to see about getting things done in the Cage. She also lets folks know that she might've had something to do with the dismantling of the factions. (She didn't, but why pass up a

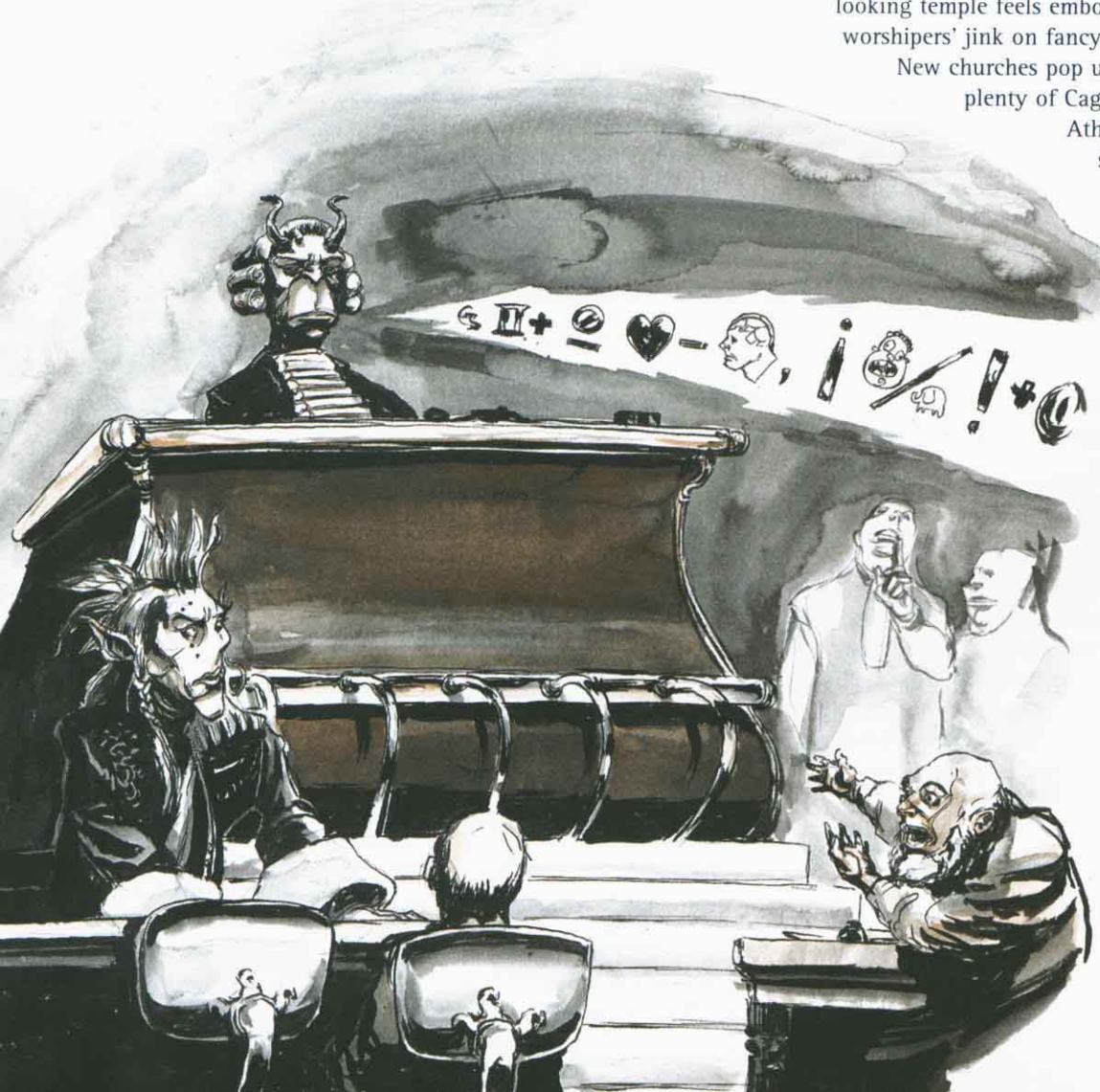
chance to impress the gullies?) The fiend yanks the strings of the many nobles and businessmen who owe her favors, hoping to get everyone dancing to her tune. Fact is, plenty of golden lords in the High Houses of The Lady's Ward work with Shemeshka—especially those who don't mind getting their manicured hands dirty in order to guarantee results.

Naturally, the fiend's rivals don't take her bid for power lying down. The deep pockets of Zadora (Pl/♀ titan/HD 20/Merkhant/N) have funded the research and business enterprises of plenty of Cagers, and the reclusive titan looks to knock Shemeshka out of the loop—literally and figuratively. And then there's Estavan (Pl/♂ ogre mage/HD 5+2/LE), the burg's representative of the vast Planar Trade Consortium. He'd always hoped to parlay his wealth and connections into something more, but the sod's so busy trying to reroute caravans and appease clients that he's afraid his big chance might slip through his fingers unless he takes action right quick.

But business high-ups aren't the only ones enjoying the moment. With the Athar gone from the Cage (or, at least, driven underground), priests, proxies, and religious outfits of every stripe become more prominent—and, some'd say, more troublesome. Their proselytizing grows more aggressive, as does their collection of funds. Fact is, many a shabby-looking temple feels emboldened to spend a little of its worshipers' jink on fancy decorations and expansions.

New churches pop up all over town. Before long, plenty of Cagers actually grow to miss the Athar, who never really kept the servants of the powers down, but always managed to make them accountable for their actions.

Finally, a formerly obscure group known as the Daughters of the Light takes it upon themselves to enforce the Lady's ban on the factions. They vigilantly and militantly root out any hint of faction activity in the Cage, hunting down sods they suspect of skulking about in the shadows. They claim to have the Lady's backing, which most bashers doubt, and they see conspiracies everywhere they turn—probably because that's exactly what the paranoid berks go looking for.



◆ RUNNING THE CITY ◆

They may have been self-centered. They may have been arrogant. They may have been bureaucratic, domineering, frustrating, and even crooked. But for better or for worse, the factions governed Sigil. Now that they're gone, who steps in to carry on their functions? Sure, the wealthy lords and merchants squabble over influence and territories, but who collects the taxes, sits in the judges' chairs, and keeps the streets safe? In other words, who does the day-to-day work of keeping the Cage running?

Well, a good number of factions stay in Sigil and continue their activities. Naturally, they disband and relinquish any control they had in the city government, but they keep doing what they do best. Cutters who once called themselves Sensates still oversee the entertainment in the Civic Festhall. The former Dustmen still tend to the corpses in the Mortuary. Ex-Bleakers minister to the sick and barmy at the Gatehouse. Folks who were branded Indeps by others still hold the reins of the Market. The main difference is that each operation's now run more like a business, and they're all open to outsiders—any bashers willing to work can get hired.

But the former factions can't carry out the official, administrative tasks necessary for running Sigil. Other people must fill those shoes.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

As mentioned earlier, the Sons of Mercy take it upon themselves to patrol the streets and make ne'er-do-wells pay—fairly, of course—for their crimes. But they run into two problems. First of all, they haven't been officially invested with the power to make arrests or carry out sentences; they're more like a group of concerned (and well-armed) citizens. Second, Arwyl Swan's Son insists that his followers maintain the highest possible ethical standards. The blood wants to make it clear that his group's nothing like the Harmonium or the Mercykillers could be on a bad day. But the paladin's a bit naïve—sometimes, a basher who wants to clean out the gutter just has to get down there with the filth.

Thus, Cagers don't have a lot of respect for (or faith in) the Sons of Mercy. As a result, crime soars all over the city, forcing folks to seek out their own means of protection. Ironically, many turn to the Minder's Guild. Those rough-and-tumble berks may play dirty, but they sure get results. That pains Arwyl and his group to no end, but they're determined to set a good example and prove that it doesn't take a thug to enforce the peace.

THE COURTS

The Sons of Mercy may have a lock on scragging and punishing criminals, but they don't dare serve as judge and jury, as well. If they did, Arwyl fears (and rightly so) that the Cagers'd distrust his cutters even more. But the Guvners

have abandoned their judge-ships and gone back to Mechanus. So who's willing, available, and qualified to pass sentence on the accused?

The dabus. (Well, two out of three ain't bad.) The mute servants of the Lady of Pain step forward, claiming that Her Serenity has ordered them to take charge of the judicial system. And who dares take issue with 'em? Hundreds of dabus park themselves in judges' chairs all over the city, ready to listen to arguments and render judgments. Truth is, the dabus have a few things going for them—namely, they don't take garnish and they don't seem corruptible, so folks can trust them to be sincere and upstanding, at the very least.

'Course, there's that slight matter of communication. It's hard for an advocate to understand a judge's decision when it's delivered as a string of picture-symbols floating in the air. Even worse, because many symbols can be interpreted to mean different things, it becomes common for both the prosecution and the defense to claim victory once the verdict's announced. Business booms for talented court translators, and the crime rate actually drops a bit—what berk wants to risk his future on the interpretation of a rebus?

In time, the dabus seem to grow weary or dissatisfied with the steady stream of cases, and they make it known that they're willing to rehire a few experienced judges to help lighten the load. However, they recruit only those bloods who served as judges first and foremost—not ex-Guvners who got the job through cronyism or political schemers who finagled their way onto the bench. As a result, Sigil's judicial system becomes the cleanest it's been in decades, and folks eventually grow used to seeing dabus wearing powdered wigs.

COLLECTING TAXES

With the Fated gone from the Cage, there's no one around to collect taxes—and no one's eager to take on the job, either. So folks no longer have to worry about setting aside huge piles of jink to pay off their tax burdens. It seems like a great idea at first, but soon everyone worries about how this new lack of funds'll impact their fair city.

But then a strange thing happens—nothing. That is, nothing seems to change. The roads don't fall apart, the clock towers don't stop running, and the water doesn't cloud over with filth (not any more than usual, anyway). The city remains totally unaffected. And then folks realize: The coins they gave to the tax collectors never went toward the benefit of Sigil. Instead, the money supported the vastly complex



and inefficient tax-collecting bureaucracy itself. It took a lot of jink to hire collectors and accountants, rent office and vault space, and process stacks of paperwork in duplicate and triplicate. Once the bloated institution went away, so did the need for funds to keep it running—truly the worst example of a self-perpetuating process.

Plenty of sods feel angry and sheepish for a good while, having forked over so much of their hard-earned jink without questioning where it all went, but in the end, they're more than glad that taxes're a thing of the past.

PAPER TRAILS

In addition to soaking the Cagers for unnecessary taxes, the Fated used to run the Hall of Records, where they assembled and maintained a mammoth collection of files—birth and death records, deeds, mortgages, business transactions, and the like. Faction members meant to take much of the paperwork with them when they fled to Ysgard (perhaps for future blackmail purposes), but since they got chased out of Sigil pretty quick, they had to leave it all behind.

When chant spreads around town that the Hall's sitting empty, waves of citizens head there to comb through the records. Bashers tear up loan agreements, remove personal files they'd like to keep private, dig up the dark on the secret dealings of their enemies, and so on. After a week or two, the Sigil Advisory Council orders the Hall locked and guarded until they can figure out what to do with it, but by then it's too late—few records remain intact. Thus, it seems that the slate's been wiped clean for just about every berk in Sigil.

'Course, folks still worry. After all, much of the stolen information's still out there, somewhere, just waiting to be used and abused.

THE GREAT FOUNDRY

Under the auspices of the Believers of the Source, this gargantuan, sweltering, smoke-belching eyesore turned out most of the metal-works that Cagers used everyday but never really thought about—tools, bolts, iron poles, nails, and other common items. Folks in the Lower Ward somehow grew used to the smog and the noise, no longer even noticing how the place befouled the skyline. But when the Godsmen packed up and left town, the Foundry suddenly grew silent—and that caught everyone's attention. Clearly, *some-*

one had to keep the operations going, especially since merchants could no longer count on importing items to round out the city's needs.

A group of bladelings takes over the Foundry and begins producing much-needed items. Most folks just shrug at the odd newcomers and buy their wares gladly, but a few wonder if the bladelings have a hidden agenda.

STORING ARMS

The Doomguard used to keep the city's supply of weapons and equipment of war in the Armory, but Ely Cromlich ended up giving much of it away after Factol Pentar disappeared. The Sinkers ran through a lot more while fighting the faction war. And when the Armory collapsed in rubble, scavengers picked up whatever loose weapons they could find (which should give many Cagers sleepless nights).

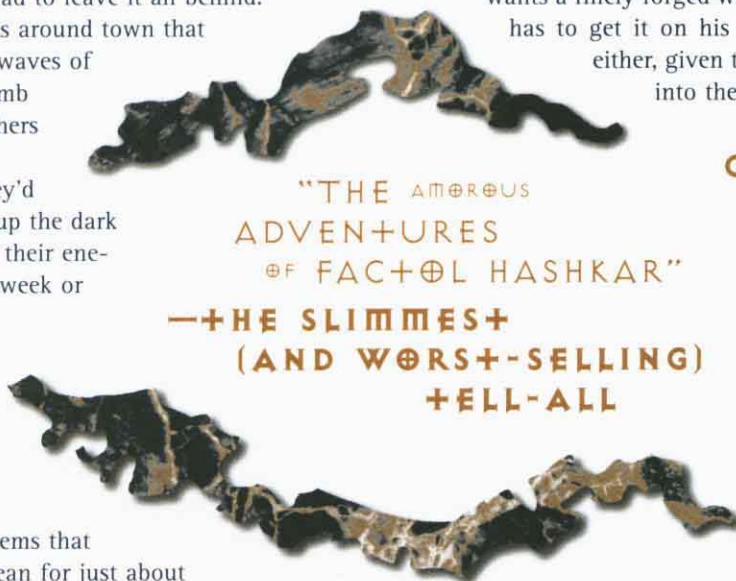
As a result, Sigil no longer *has* a supply of arms, nor a place to keep 'em if they existed. Nowadays, if a berk wants a finely forged weapon or a special shield, he just has to get it on his own. And that's no easy trick either, given that fewer goods make their way into the Cage.

CITY CLEANUP

The dabus continue to sweep up the streets, trim back the razorbines, and repair the roads, just as they always have. However, with large numbers of 'em acting as judges (and filling various other holes in the workings of Sigil), there just don't seem to be as many around to keep the burg clean. That strikes Cagers as a bit odd—

most always assumed that the Lady had as many dabus as there were leaves on Arborea, a nigh-infinite number. But that doesn't seem to be the case, and not even the graybeards can explain what caused the population to shrink.

In any case, folks soon realize that they've got to pitch in to keep their city from looking like a run-down ruin. Everywhere in town, cutters take up brooms, shears, rags, and mortar, determined to keep their own little patch of Sigil looking good. The high-and-mighty bloods of The Lady's Ward pass the work on to their servants, of course, and residents of the Hive don't see why they should suddenly give a fig about their neighborhood, but otherwise cleanup becomes a city-wide effort. And it seems likely to stay that way—at least, until the numbers of dabus start to grow again.



◆ FACION FEVER ◆

In the months following the end of the war, public interest in the fighting and the factions skyrockets as Cagers struggle to understand the dark of it all. Not everyone gets to live through such a momentous time in their city's history, and every basher in Sigil seems obsessed with taking in all he can about the terrible—yet somehow fascinating—experience. This desire soon becomes a craze to shine a light on the factions themselves, to ask the kinds of tough and engaging questions that used to get a berk pummeled (or worse). The phenomenon comes to be known as “faction fever.”

The theaters of the Civic Festhall have to turn folks away from their standing-room-only nightly performances. In the larger Ren Hall, an Elysian acting troupe puts on a bawdy farce skewering the factions and their power-hungry leaders, a show that never fails to delight the common folks and anger former factioneers in the audience. Meanwhile, in the smaller Elloweth Theater, a tiefling group plays to a more distinguished crowd with a sorrowful drama about the miseries of war.

The reading market's flooded with hastily penned biographies of the factols, written by berks who claim to have been close confidants of the high-ups—or, at least, friends with those who were.

'Course, most of the books're lurid, tell-all pieces of sensational trash built around a delicate framework of occasional fact, but that doesn't quash the public's appetite for 'em. Best-sellers include *Lust on the Planes*, a so-called account of Erin Montgomery's exploits before coming to Sigil, and *Rowan's Story*, which purports to delve inside the brain-box of the man who started a war for his own selfish purposes. Respected author Jeena Ealy writes a fair and unbiased book about the factols, but copies pile up unsold in the shops—the plain truth just doesn't sell. However, booksellers can't keep the once-banned *Factol's Manifesto* in stock; it seems that every basher wants to see what the factions didn't want him to know.

For those who've seen all the plays and read all the books, there's always the Factologium, a museum of history and propaganda in the Clerk's Ward. Its owner, O'pok the Fawning (Pl/♂ githzerai/F2/CN), used to focus only on the factols, but lately he's expanded the museum to include dis-

plays on the groups themselves, stretching back hundreds of years. The cutter used to receive jink from the factions to fund his work (and to make sure that he presented their high-ups *properly*), but now that his backers've gone away, he's looking for new donors.

“Faction fever” also results in several additions to the cant, used mostly by self-styled hipsters who're quick to follow the latest trends. A berk who's too violent for his own good might be chided by his friends not to be such a “pentar.” To “skall” is to boast, bluster, or otherwise gain a reputation solely by word of mouth. And so on. What's more, a few established terms take on different meanings—for example, “hardhead” comes to refer to any stubborn or dim-witted basher, and someone who's beaten up or wounded is said to have suffered “the red death.”

◆ RESTORING THE STATUS QUO ◆

Obviously, the faction war brings about sweeping and lasting changes to Sigil. But what if the DM doesn't want to alter his PLANESCAPE campaign so drastically? Well, naturally he's free to institute only the parts of the adventure and the Aftermath that he likes. For example, the Doomguard might reform under a new, more level-headed leader. One or more factions might put together a team to head to the Ethereal and rescue their factol from the Mazes. Perhaps most of the portals reappear exactly as they were, or maybe the PCs can undertake an epic quest to restore them to their original configuration. The DM can even decide that the Lady

allows the factions to remain active in Sigil but punishes them in another way.

Maybe each group must make amends for its misdeeds (not only during the war, but over the last 630-odd years), or perhaps they're forced to switch roles (so that the Harmonium dispose of corpses, the Sensates judge the guilty, and so on).

On the other hand, the DM should realize that all PLANESCAPE products published after *Faction War* will assume that the conflict and its consequences took place as described in these pages. However, those products won't focus on Sigil or the factions—at least, not for awhile—so they should fit easily into any DM's campaign. And when PLANESCAPE once again turns its gaze to the City of Doors and its exiled philosophers-with-clubs, well, don't worry, berk. The story ain't over yet.



SE YOU DON'T LIKE
THE WAY THINGS ARE
IN SIGIL NOW? JUST WAIT.
IT'LL CHANGE.

IT ALWAYS DOES.

—TARSHEVA LONGREACH



THE MIND'S EYE (SEEKERS, VISIONARIES)

FACTION PHILOSOPHY. Ever hear a body say that he's going off to look for himself? Usually, he means that he's got to puzzle out a few problems and figure out just what kind of a basher he really is—that he's going on a journey of spiritual discovery. Well, the members of the Mind's Eye take that idea a step further. They believe they're so connected to the multiverse that they can find themselves only by "finding" the infinite wonder and fulfillment of the planes.

Sitting in one place won't help a body grow; he's got to forge out into the unknown, seeking out the kinds of challenges that'll test his character and show him what he's really made of. Ultimately, those who prove themselves worthy enough (whatever that means) may pass into a new kind of existence. 'Course, each basher must follow his own path toward personal discovery, as the cosmos holds different challenges for all. Everyone's the center of his own world. But it's more than that—the Mind's Eye likes to say that by facing the tests of the unknown, a cutter defines not only himself but the reality around him, bringing with him as much meaning as he takes away. In other words, everyone shapes and is shaped by the multiverse, a relationship that benefits both.

Sound harmless? It would be, if it wasn't for the fact that Seekers consider the cosmos their own personal playground and feel that everything and everyone in it exists only to inform their journey of self-discovery. As a result, the Seekers feel removed from their surroundings, almost as if they're actors on a stage cluttered with scenery, props, and bit players. They tend to be arrogant, inconsiderate, and at times wholly oblivious to the concerns of others. Lots of folks call 'em "the Mind's I" instead.

Don't misunderstand, though—Seekers aren't cold-hearted or aggressive, and they won't put a berk in the dead-book without good cause (even if his life's worth less than their own). They're just out to explore the multiverse and, in the process, find themselves. They don't expect other sods to understand.

PRINCIPAL PLANE OF INFLUENCE. The Seekers prefer the Outlands, which sit at the center of the Outer Planes and provide easy access to the rest of the multiverse. Rather than

wander the Land, they maintain a base in each of the gate-towns, the better to catch a quick portal to wherever they want to go. What's more, they enjoy being so close to the Hinterlands—the unexplored and mysterious area that lies beyond the ring of gate-towns. Its virgin ground seems ripe with potential.



ALLIES AND ENEMIES. It takes a while for chant about the Mind's Eye to spread around the Outer Planes, but once it does, other factions that also chose exile over dissolution take an interest. The Fraternity of Order, in particular, finds parallels with their own quest to understand and thus control the laws of the multiverse. The Athar extend an offer of friendship simply because they call kip on the same plane (and because they need all the friends they can get, frankly).

The Seekers don't really have any foes among the remaining factions, though their brashness and arrogance often gets 'em in trouble with ordinary bashers.

ELIGIBILITY. Many think that because the Mind's Eye calls the Outlands home, they encourage their members to be neutral. Not true—the faction accepts bashers of any race, class, or alignment. Personality's much more important; a Seeker must have a tremendous (some'd say exaggerated) sense of self-worth.

BENEFITS. Because of their relationship with the multiverse, all Seekers gain a +2 bonus when attempting to disbelieve an illusion. Those who reach 3rd level can also *remove fear* (as per the spell) once per day, and those who reach 7th level gain an innate, slight sense of direction, even in a place they've never been before.

RESTRICTIONS. Most folks dislike the Mind's Eye, so all Seekers suffer a -2 penalty to their reaction rolls. Merchants routinely overcharge them by 10–20%, and chant-mongers refuse to give them information (or simply lie) unless someone else vouches for 'em.

THE FACTOLS: A SUMMARY

Athar. Factol Terrance is banished to the Mazes on Day 11 of the game. The Defiers let everyone know that he's missing and blame priests, proxies, and Signers.

Believers of the Source. Factol Ambar Vergrove is banished to the Mazes on Day 11 of the game. His disappearance is known only to the Godsmen, who believe that Vergrove has ascended.

Bleak Cabal. Factol Sruce is banished to the Mazes on Day 11 of the game. Her disappearance is known only to the Bleakers, though they'll mention it to anyone who asks. They don't know (or care) where she's gone.

Doomguard. Factol Pentar is banished to the Mazes on Day 5 of the game. The Sinkers let everyone know that she's missing and blame the Harmonium and the Sensates.

Dustmen. Factol Skull is banished to the Mazes on Day 9 of the game. His disappearance is known only to the Dustmen, who believe that Skull has achieved the purity of True Death.

Fated. Factol Darkwood is banished to the Mazes on Day 19 of the game, though Gifad, his older self, remains confined in the Gatehouse. His disappearance is known only to the Fated, who suspect that the war's driven him into hiding.

Fraternity of Order. Factol Hashkar is slain by a vengeful criminal on Day 23 of the game. His murder is public knowledge. Witnesses blame the lone assassin, a Xaositect; the Guvners blame the entire Xaositect faction.

Free League. Bria Tomay, Lethea, and Lysander are banished to the Mazes on Day 9 of the game. The Indeps let everyone know that they're missing and blame the Harmonium.

Harmonium. Factol Sarin is assassinated by a member of the Revolutionary League on Day 16 of the game. His murder is public knowledge. The Anarchists boldly claim credit for the deed.

Mercykillers. Factol Nilesia is kidnapped by Darkwood and sold into fiendish slavery on Day 10 of the game. The rest of the Mercykillers don't know where she's gone, but they're too busy infighting to worry about it.

Revolutionary League. Various cell leaders are banished to the Mazes on Day 9 of the game. Each berk's disappearance is known only to his or her cell members, who blame the Harmonium, the Guvners, and the Mercykillers.

Sign of One. Factol Darius is banished to the Mazes on Day 11 of the game. Her disappearance is known only to the Signers, who believe that Darius has ascended.

Society of Sensation. Factol Montgomery is banished to the Mazes on Day 5 of the game. Her disappearance is known only to the Sensates, who blame Rowan Darkwood.

Transcendent Order. Factol Rhys, warned by a precognition, leaves Sigil of her own free will on Day 1 of the game. Her absence is known only to her most trusted factors.

Xaositects. Factol Karan is banished to the Mazes on Day 16 of the game. His disappearance is public knowledge, as it happens while Karan's in Harmonium custody. The Xaositects blame the Hardheads.

THE WAR: A SUMMARY

"The enemies of peace": Doomguard, Revolutionary League, Free League, Xaositects, Sodkillers (Mercykiller splinter group).

"The oppressors of Sigil": Harmonium, Sensates, Signers, Guvners, Godsmen, Sons of Mercy (Mercykiller splinter group).

Neutral: Athar, Bleak Cabal, Dustmen, Fated (some fight on either side), Transcendent Order, Mercykillers (faction purists).

TIMELINE

The Timeline features the main events of the war, which will take place no matter what the player characters do. It doesn't include PC actions, which can't be predicted or scheduled. Not all events listed below are described in the adventure text. Also, the DM should feel free to customize the war by adding his own events to the Timeline or adjusting the amount of time the war takes to suit his own campaign.

DAY 0 The wizard Vadelisu realizes that he's stumbled upon the dangerous knowledge of the long-hidden Sigil spell. He buys passage to Nowhere in order to gain time to figure out what to do next.

DAY 1 (PROLOGUE) Rowan Darkwood finally obtains the ebony gem in which the spirit of the ancient wizard is imprisoned, and he begins to study it. At last, he can kick off his plan to set the factions at each others' throats.

Factol Rhys of the Ciphers, in touch with the cadence of the planes, realizes that something bad's about to happen in Sigil. To safeguard herself and her faction, she leaves the Cage and takes refuge at a Cipher base on Elysium. Only a few of her most trusted advisors know this.

DAY 5 By this time, Darkwood has peeled the Doomguard and the Harmonium into suspecting each other of imminent attack. He also convinced the Revolutionary League to join the Doomguard and strike while the iron is hot. Naturally, the Sensates also make fine targets. No actual fighting takes place yet—just simmering tensions.

The Lady of Pain throws Erin Montgomery and Pentar into the Mazes. The Sensates keep Erin's disappearance quiet, though they blame Darkwood. The Doomguard shout news of Pentar's disappearance all over the Cage and blame both the Harmonium and the Sensates.

DAY 7 Darkwood secretly marries Alisoht Nilesia in a private ceremony. Neither of their factions knows of the wedding.

The Harmonium demand that the Doomguard vacate the Armory and turn all weapons over to Hardhead control. The Sinkers tell the Harmonium to pike it.

DAY 8 Darkwood gets word that a barmy up at the Gatehouse has feverishly demanded to see him. The Duke couldn't care less and pays no attention.

DAY 9 The Lady banishes Skall, Bria Tomay, the wemics Lethea and Lysander, and various cell leaders of the Revolutionary League to the Mazes. The Dustmen keep it quiet. The Free League loudly blame the Harmonium, who've persecuted the Indeeps for years. The Anarchists likewise make a big noise about the disappearances; they, too, blame the Harmonium, though they also accuse the Guvners and the Mercykillers.

Nilesia orders her most loyal Mercykiller troops to follow Darkwood's word as if it were her own.

DAY 10 An apocalyptic group known as the Eschaton surfaces in Sigil, proclaiming that the missing factols and the growing tensions are portents of impending doom.

Darkwood overpowers Nilesia and uses a portal in the bowels of the Prison to sell her as a slave to fiends of the Lower Planes. With her disappearance, the Mercykiller faction starts to splinter.

DAY 11 The Lady consigns Darius, Sruce, Terrance, and Ambar to the Mazes. The Bleakers keep it quiet; what do they care? The Godsmen and the Signers quietly claim that their factols have ascended. The Athar, on the other hand, blame both the Signers and vengeful priests of Sigil.

Ely Cromlich starts distributing Sinker-forged weapons to anyone who swears to use them against the Harmonium.

DAY 13 Darkwood visits the Civic Festhall and arrogantly preserves the details of his scheme in a *recorder stone*.

Gifad the barmy tries (and fails) to escape from his keepers at the Gatehouse.

DAY 16 (ACT 1: GUARDING RR'KA) The adventure begins here for the PCs, as they're hired to protect a Factol Karan lookalike who turns out to be the real thing.

Arwyl Swan's Son announces the splintering of the Mercykillers into the Sons of Mercy, the Sodkillers, and a third group that retains the faction name.

Factol Karan vanishes while in Harmonium custody, and the Xaositects blame the Hardheads.

Factol Sarin is killed by the Revolutionary League, who call it a victory for Anarchists and Sinkers everywhere. The Harmonium nearly riot in fury, but level-headed leaders emerge to shepherd the faction and plan a coordinated attack on the Armory.

DAY 17 The Sons of Mercy begin releasing unjustly jailed sods from the Prison, meeting little opposition from the confused bashers who still call themselves Mercykillers. Darkwood uses this opportunity to secretly set a few dozen vicious killers free as well.

Anarchists attack a Sensate bar in the Guildhall Ward, sending everyone inside to the dead-book.

DAY 19 The Harmonium officially (and unexpectedly) allies with the Sensates against the combined force of the Doomguard and the Revolutionary League.

The Doomguard asks the Bleak Cabal to join their battle against "the oppressors of Sigil." The Bleakers refuse—fighting in a war has no more meaning than anything else in the multiverse.

By communing with the spirit in the gem, Darkwood finally learns how to free the powerful blood. Before he can act, though, the Lady throws him into the Mazes. The gem remains in Sigil.

DAY 20 The Indeeps decide they can no longer sit by while the Harmonium decimates their ranks. They call for all Free Leaguers to help the Sinkers and the Anarchists bring down the Hardheads.

A bubber finds the Duke's gem in a gutter and trades it for a stiff ale. The barman then sells it to a friend, and over the next few days the gem passes through many hands.

DAY 21 With the Red Death (and various offshoots) distracted, the Mercykiller Wyrn escapes from the Tower of the Wyrn and randomly attacks berks on the street until put down.

DAY 23 The Sons of Mercy, led by Arwyl Swan's Son, agree to back the Harmonium and the Sensates.

One of the killers released from the Prison puts Factol Hashkar in the dead-book, fulfilling a threat made years earlier. He's the last factol to fall. Because the murderer is a Xaositect, the Guvners blame that entire faction.

Eager for an excuse to commit violence upon anyone they dislike, the leaderless Sodkillers drift to the Doomguard side of the war.

DAY 25 (ACT II: THE BATTLE AT THE ARMORY) In the first major conflict of the war, the Harmonium lead the Sons of Mercy and the Sensates in an attack on the Armory, which is defended by the Doomguard, the Anarchists, the Indeps, and the Sodkillers. The battle results in the Armory's utter destruction, and most Sinkers end up scattered or dead.

DAY 28 (ACT III: THE ESCHATON) The Xaositects join the war on the side of the Doomguard. In direct and immediate response, angry members of the Fraternity of Order pledge support to the other side.

The Duke's gem ends up in the hands of Alluvius Ruskin, who's sought the prize for a long, long time. But she can't figure out how to release its mysterious power.

The PCs are asked to investigate the Eschaton to determine if the doomsayers might try to bring about the very destruction they prophesy.

DAY 29 The Sign of One joins the Harmonium, the Sons of Mercy, the Fraternity of Order, and the Sensates in their quest to "put down the enemies of peace."

DAY 30 The Athar declare their neutrality, refusing to side with the Sign of One but unwilling to support the Doomguard.

DAY 31 The Eschaton hears false rumors that the Harmonium plans to raze their Guildhall Ward headquarters just as they tore down the Armory. As a result, the group steps up its campaign to spread the word of imminent doom.

The Believers offer their support to the Sensates and Signers, looking upon the destructive Sinker and Anarchist forces as a test to be overcome.

DAY 32 To provide further distraction for a possible yugoloth takeover of Sigil, a yagnoloth named Incarus manipulates Ely Cromlich into setting up a tanar'ri invasion. Meanwhile, Incarus leaks word of this to the baatezu.

The Anarchists manipulate the Xaositects and the Indeps into preparing to attack the Civic Festhall in retaliation for the destruction of the Armory.

DAY 33 (ACT IV: DARKSTORM) The Harmonium, Guvners, and Sensates gather in the Lower Ward to prevent the Xaositects and Indeps from ever reaching the Festhall.

Tanar'ri and baatezu forces invade the Cage right in the middle of the opposing faction armies.

While battle rages in the Lower Ward, a group of Sodkillers unexpectedly attacks the Civic Festhall, joined by assorted tanar'ri seeking to put Erin Montgomery in the dead-book.

DAY 34 The Lady of Pain closes all portals leading into or out of Sigil. Two reasons seem obvious: First, so that the factions will settle their conflict once and for all, with no chance to flee or call in reinforcements; and second, to halt the fiends' incursion into the city. The third reason remains dark.

DAY 35 Madness grips the Cage and a citywide riot erupts as the denizens realize all the consequences of the portals closing. The uprising threatens to destroy the city until virtually every Cipher in Sigil appears on the streets, urging calm and lending stability to bewildered sods.

DAY 37 The Anarchists take it upon themselves to punish the Bleak Cabal for refusing to aid the Doomguard against the Harmonium. Revolutionary League spies pose as Bleakers and infiltrate the Gatehouse—the first stage in a plan to cause havoc by setting many of the inmates free.

DAY 39 (ACT V: MAGIC UNCAGED) The wizard Vadelisu leaves the safety of Nowhere and tries to cast the Sigil spell. Various forces try to stop him and get the spell scroll for themselves. Vadelisu completes the spell, with no apparent result.

THE END OF THE WAR

At some point after Vadelisu tries to cast the Sigil spell, the PCs play through the events of ACT VI: THE UNITY OF RINGS. They receive an important clue from the editor of the *Factol's Manifesto*; talk to the barmy Gifad at the Gatehouse; recover the ebony gem from Alluvius Ruskin's shop; and (hopefully) use its power to end the faction war.

These actions must take place after everything listed previously in the Timeline, but because PCs are unpredictable, the events can't be assigned to any particular days.

AFTER THE END OF THE WAR

Events transpire as described in the Aftermath.

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Faction War builds on story elements first explored in the PLANESCAPE® accessories *In the Cage*, *Factol's Manifesto*, and *Uncaged: Faces of Sigil*. Familiarity with those products is recommended but not required.

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ASIA, PACIFIC & LATIN AMERICA
Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
P.O. Box 707
Renton, WA 98057-0707
1-800-324-6496



EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS
Wizards of the Coast, Belgium
P.B. 34
2300 Turnhout
Belgium
+32-14-44-30-44

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